

Wild

AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

Spring
(October–December) 1994, no 54
\$6.50*

**PEAK
BAGGERS'
GUIDEBOOK INSIDE**

Surveys:

**Water
purification
Rockclimbing
gyms**

Bushwalking:

**Long-distance tracks
Walking near
Canberra
Eating better for
the bush**

**Trekking highest
Africa**

Wildest Queensland

**The unflooding
of Lake Pedder**

**Rockclimbing
reflections**



ISSN 1030-469X

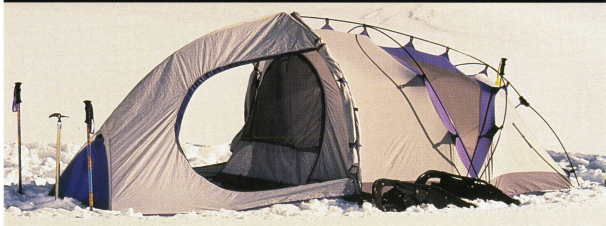


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WARNING

The activities covered by this magazine are dangerous. Undertaking them without proper training, experience, skill, regard to safety, and equipment could result in serious injury or death.

Cover Melbourne climber Paul O'Byrne at 7600 metres on Tibet's Shisha Pangma (8046 metres). *Andrew Evans*

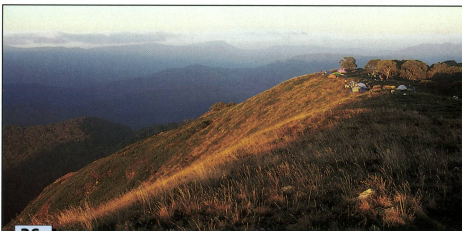
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Wild

AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

Established 1981

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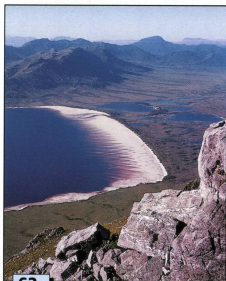
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Assistant Editors David Burnett,
Glenn van der Knijff
Sub-editor Mary Harber
Advertising Stephen Hamilton
Subscriptions Joan Lewins, Graeme Owers
Accounts Ann Dressler
Design & production Bruce Godden
Consultants Michael Collie, Brian Walters

Contributing Editors
Stephen Buntin Caving
John Chapman Track Notes
Stephen Garnett Natural History
Michael Hampton Cross-country Skiing
Tim Macartney-Snape
Greg Mortimer Mountaineering
Yvonne McLaughlin Canoeing
Brian Walters Reviews

Special Advisers
Andrew Cox, Roger Lembit,
Duncan Menk, David Noble (NSW),
Bob Burton, Grant Dixon, Geoff Law,
Ted Mead (Tas), Glenn Tempest (Vic),
Jamie Pittcock (NT)

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Contributions, preferably well illustrated with slides, are welcome. *Guide-lines* for Contributors are available on receipt of a stamped, addressed envelope. Submissions should be either typed, double-spaced on one side of an A4 sheet of paper or, preferably, supplied on an IBM-formatted floppy disk, saved as either a text file or an ASCII file. Hard copy, printed as described above, should accompany the disk. Submissions not accompanied by an envelope and sufficient postage *cannot* be returned.

Names and addresses should be written on disks, manuscripts and photos. While every care is taken, we do not accept responsibility for material submitted. Articles represent the views of the authors, and not necessarily those of the publisher.

Editorial, advertising, subscription, distribution and general correspondence to:

Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415,
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Spending our way to environmental riches?

It has been a tactic of developers of wilderness areas to brand those opposed to their often questionable activities as being 'against everything'. Perhaps partly in response to such taunts, and in search of allies, conservationists have tended to be quick to suggest alternative commercial development. Often too quick, in my view.

This predilection has spawned a rash of trendy ecotourism ventures from Cape York to South-west Tasmania. Using truck-loads of arty stationery and advertising leaflets (brown paper is *de rigueur*), they are at pains to assure us of their unblemished environmental credentials. But it seems that in many cases the environment has only escaped the frying-pan of wholesale development to perish in the fire of creeping development in the guise of ecotourism.

The battle to preserve Victoria's Mt Stirling from development as a downhill ski resort is a case in point. If you are familiar with the area it will be obvious to you that while the sort of development envisaged by Messrs Grollo, Kennett & co would result in the indefensible destruction of a major and unique alpine peak, the area is not sufficiently extensive or resilient to bear any further development without serious degradation of its immense natural charm.

Areas like Mt Stirling are attractive and valuable *because* they are undeveloped. Wilderness is of incalculable intrinsic value, even if not all of us realize it yet. This is the message we have a duty to espouse no matter how unpalatable it may be to some initially. We should certainly not close our minds to the possibility of economic alternatives to logging, alpine real estate development and the like, but our response must be carefully considered, rather than based on short-term expediency. Wilderness is not a commodity that can be packaged, marketed and sold without the loss of wilderness itself, its economic value (Japanese and European tourists visiting Australia are attracted precisely by what they lack at home—untrammelled wilderness) and, ultimately, its spiritual value to our entire race.

It must be Christmas

In *Wild* no 50 I announced that, as part of our quest to raise the quality of writing in *Wild*, we would pay an annual award of \$750, the *Wild* Article of the Year Award. (Judging from the outstanding response to our latest issue, no 53, the quest has already made its mark.) It gives me great pleasure to announce that the winner of the inaugural award, chosen from articles appearing in issues 50–53, inclusive, is Peter Jackson, for his article on Peter Dombrovskis published in *Wild* no 53. Let's see your article soon.

In *Wild* no 52 we made it known that simply by subscribing to *Wild* or renewing an existing subscription, readers could win \$3000 worth

of Australian air travel and a complete set of the first 50 issues of *Wild*. Following the draw to determine the winners, Dennis Byrne of Thornbury, Victoria, is flying high, as it were! Meanwhile Carl Ridgeway of Beechworth, Victoria, has no shortage of reading material. We congratulate the lucky duo and take this opportunity to thank all our subscribers—who have helped to take our subscription list to record levels.

With this issue I am writing to subscribers to urge them to 'sign up a friend' as a subscriber. For *Wild* to continue to be a strong and effective voice for the interests of bushwalkers and other wilderness lovers in protecting our threatened wild places from the twin perils of development and bureaucracy, we need a substantial and growing core of committed readers—our subscribers. Whether or not you are currently a subscriber, I ask you to consider joining us in this way.

Each year we donate a proportion of the income we derive from subscriptions to organizations working for present and future generations, particularly to those concerned with protecting the environment. Major donations made this year include \$3700 to World Vision and \$3700 to the Wilderness Society. In addition, we gave \$1000 to the Tasmanian Conservation Trust and pledged the same amount for each of the next two years to help fund a position for leading Tasmanian conservationist, and a *Wild* Special Adviser since our first issue, Bob Burton. Winner of a United Nations Global 500 Award in 1992 in recognition of his long-standing conservation efforts, Burton has been described as one of Australia's most effective environmental campaigners.

Finally, we are proud to sponsor an expedition led by distinguished Australian mountaineer and *Wild* Contributing Editor for Mountaineering Greg Mortimer to Chongtar (7350 metres) in China, one of the world's highest unclimbed peaks. ■

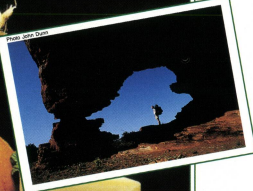
Chris Baxter

Environmental impact statement

This magazine is printed on Ozone paper, which is made of 75 per cent post-consumer waste that has been recycled and oxygen-bleached. We are not aware of any other glossy paper suitable for magazine publishing that includes as high a level of recycled post-consumer waste. As a suitably heavy weight of Ozone is not available for the cover, that section is printed on Topkote paper, which is made of oxygen-bleached 40 per cent recycled pre-consumer waste and 10 per cent post-consumer waste. We recycle the film used in the printing process. *Wild* staff run an environmentally aware office. Waste paper is recycled, printer ribbons are re-inked and waste is kept to an absolute minimum. We invite your comments and recommendations; please contact the Managing Editor.

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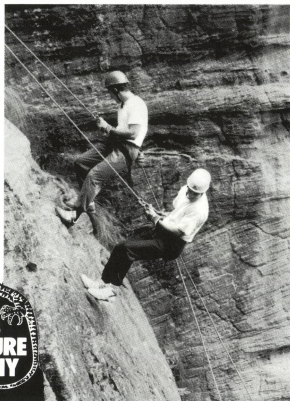
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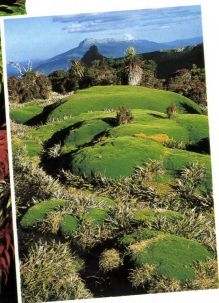
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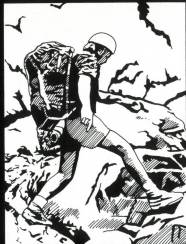
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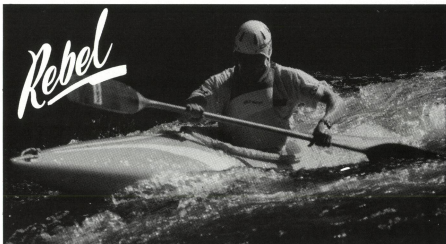
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No 44



No 45



No 46

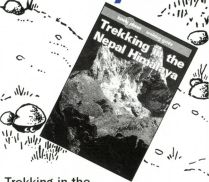


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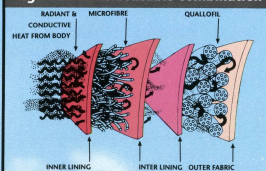
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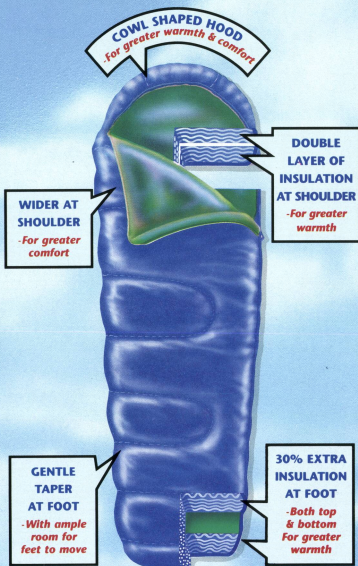
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Inside Probe	+24c
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Fill + weight	500g Quallofil ●
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Stuff Compression Type	✓
Size Extended	19 x 40cms
Size Compressed	19 x 30cms
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Temperature Rating	-3c
Outside Test Temperature	-6c
Inside Probe	+27c
Total weight	1400g
Fill + weight	800g Quallofil ●
Construction	Inner stitch free
Draft Tube + Tape Protector at zip	✓
Water Repellent, Breathable, 40 Denier Nylon	✓
Stuff Compression Type	✓
Size Extended	21 x 45cms
Size Compressed	21 x 35cms
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Temperature Rating	-8c
Outside Test Temperature	-10c
Inside Probe	+27c
Total weight	1600g
Fill + weight	800g Quallofil + 300g Micro Fibre ●●
Construction	Double wall
Draft Tube + Tape Protector at zip	✓
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ROMAN



Dear Jim,

Already visited Berlin, Vienne, Rome and today we arrived in Santorini. So many things to see! "Sleeping under the stars" is a lot of fun when you've got the right gear.

My Paddy Pallin Traveller sleeping bag is so warm, I'm asleep the moment my head hits the Mont Bell compact pillow. And my Tika Avion Travelpack sure beats a suitcase. This pack is so practical! And the zip-off daypack and hidden toilet bag are really nifty.

My Paddy Pallin 'Longs' are super comfortable and take next to no space in my travelpack. I wash them in the evening and they're dry by morning.

Our experience in Rome convinced me I should never venture anywhere without my Eagle Creek security belt. Gotta run now - we're off to our camp site.

Cheers, Hugh.

ΕΛΛΑΣ
GRIECHENLAND



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Paddy Pallin

HIGH COST

Death after Mt Everest success

Success and tragedy in the Himalayas

Australian climbers continue to be active in the highest mountain range in the world with results that have at times been sad and at others, surprising.

Seasoned Mt Everest (8872 metres) campaigner Michael Rheinberger died on 28 May while descending the North Ridge after a successful summit bid (the first Australian ascent by this route) and forced bivouac 200 metres below the summit with New Zealand climber Mark Whetu. Rheinberger, on his seventh attempt on the mountain, is likely to have died of cerebral oedema during a continuing descent cut short the night before when darkness fell on the two climbers.

A number of Australians have added an 8000 metre peak to their resumes in recent months. Melbourne climber Paul O'Byrne bagged his first eight-thousander on 9 May this year when he achieved the West Summit of Tibet's Shisha Pangma (8008 metres)—the true summit, which involves very tenuous traversing from the West Summit and is rarely climbed, is 38 metres higher) ahead of two other members of a Canadian-led expedition.

O'Byrne, whose previous highest ascent had been Canada's Mt Robson (3954 metres), reported the climbing to be of about New Zealand grade two in difficulty, complicated by the extreme altitude and steep, unconsolidated snow-slopes. The ascent took 21 days.

Brigitte Muir, who is still waiting for some luck on Mt Everest and on Antarctica's Mt Vinson to allow her to become one of the first women to climb the highest peaks on all seven continents, also climbed the Shisha Pangma West Summit in May. Fellow expedition members Melbourne policemen Paul Carr and Greg Lindsell reached the West Summit on 22 May, two days after Muir. Following this, she teamed up with Jon Tinker, Bill Pierson, Mike Brennan and Babu Chhire Sherpa for an alpine-style attempt on Cho Oyo (8201 metres), which was turned back at 6800 metres. In the process, Muir formulated a new definition for the term 'lightweight expedition'—'It just means carrying a bloody heavy pack all the way up, and a bloody heavy pack all the way down!'

Brigitte Muir and Geoff Wayatt



Brigitte Muir, who is rapidly becoming a prominent figure in the world of female mountaineers, straddling the precarious West Summit of Shisha Pangma (8008 metres), Tibet. Brigitte Muir collection. **Left**, Michael Rheinberger. John Chapman

Michael Rheinberger

There are not many men who, at 53 years of age, are striving to reach the summit of the world's highest mountain. But Michael Rheinberger was no ordinary person. Already an active bushwalker, he took up rockclimbing at the age of 37 and was a competent and safe climber.

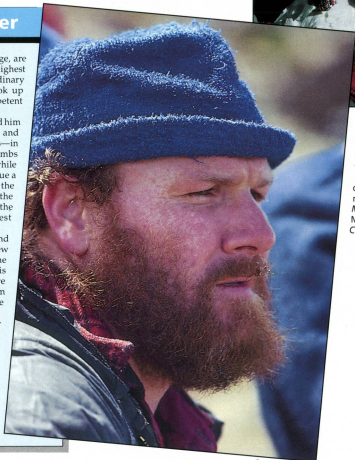
Ice climbing was an activity which challenged him both mentally and physically and he led and participated in many trips to the Himalayas—in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Tibet. Successful climbs included Broad Peak (8047 metres) and it was while on this expedition that he risked his life to rescue a famous veteran climber from nearby K2, the world's second-highest peak. He was awarded the Order of Australia for his contribution to the successful Australian Bicentennial Everest Expedition.

Michael was an exceptional planner and organizer. His ambition to climb Mt Everest grew during the late 1980s and early 1990s and he undertook regular expeditions to the peak. His organizational and leadership skills were constantly being sought by expeditions from other countries and invitations to participate followed.

Michael was a complex and deep thinker who was also able to make a difficult situation seem less so through the use of a well-developed sense of humour.

It was on an American expedition to the North Ridge that Michael's dream of summiting Mt Everest was finally fulfilled. It is fitting that he remains at peace in the mountains. He was well loved and will be missed. ■

Monica and John Chapman



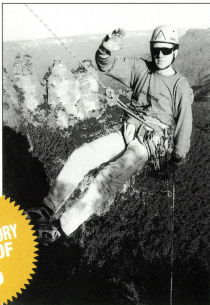
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Corrections and amplifications

The people in the small photo on page 55 of *Wild* no 53 are named from right to left. The assertion in the Kimberley's Track Notes (page 77) that a lightweight sleeping-bag is all you will need has been questioned, the writer claiming to have experienced temperatures of 5°C or less in the region. The chilly skier in the *Wild* Shot was Tony Hunter.

VICTORIA

Fit enough?

Pavement-pounders, traffic-weavers and Yarra-paddlers will get a chance to combine their favourite fitness routines with some of Victoria's most spectacular country if they enter the Mountains to City Challenge in December. Six stages (two each of running, cycling and paddling) will wind their way from Mt Buller, through Eildon and Marysville, over the Black Spur to a finish in Melbourne. See *Wild* Diary for details.

TASMANIA

Thinking of linking

After a couple of false alarms, members of the Southern Caveing Society have linked the extensive Juncus-Florentine cave Three-forty-one (JF341) with Rift Cave (JF34) after the former yielded three kilometres of new passage. News of the connection was circulated in caving circles prematurely after survey data had led members of an earlier trip to conclude that an undescribed pitch down which they were peering led to the adjacent cave. A descent of the pitch the following weekend revealed that the new passage in fact blanked out—just ten metres short of a connection! The caves were finally linked a week later, with the survey data predicting the closure with an error of only 0.4 per cent.

Earlier in the year Dave Rasch, Jeff Butt and Andrew McNeill discovered, explored and surveyed a major extension to Three-forty-one, named Into the Dinosaur. This find comes on the heels of the 1.7 kilometre extension Enterprise, the exploration of which was reported in *Wild* Information, *Wild* no 51.

The total surveyed length of this system is now 6.8 kilometres but it is expected that the final tally will be closer to eight kilometres. The recent discoveries make the Three-forty-one system the third-longest in Tasmania behind Exit Cave and Growling Swallow.

Jeff Butt

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Wild women

The Heysen Trail (see *The Long Walks* on page 36) is at present being tackled by women of all ages and abilities in the epic WomenTrek event. The relay-style trek, in which scores of participants will complete stages of the long-distance track, will be undertaken by women using everything from feet and wheelchairs to camels and horses. The event, which began on 23 July and will end with a celebration at the Mt Lofty botanical garden on 9 October, has been organized by women's groups and government health authorities to commemorate the centenary of the granting of women's suffrage in South Australia.

OVERSEAS

Mystery anniversary

This year marks the 70th anniversary of one of the most fascinating unsolved mysteries of the mountaineering world. On 8 June 1924 George Mallory and his fellow Englishman Andrew Irvine were observed climbing steadily only 300 metres from the summit of Mt Everest. Soon afterwards cloud obscured the mountain and the two were never seen again. A number of leading climbers at the time believed that Mallory and Irvine may have reached the summit before perishing on the descent. It wasn't until almost 30 years later, in 1953, that

Hillary and Tenzing were credited with reaching the top of the world's highest mountain. The disappearance of Mallory and Irvine and the speculation that surrounds the 1924 summit bid continue to arouse the curiosity of many of the world's mountaineers. Next February the 1995 American Mt Everest expedition will be retracing the footsteps—although it is to be hoped not the fatal ones—of Mallory and Irvine as a commemorative climb. Joining the expedition will be Melbourne resident, climber and grandson to Mallory, George Mallory II.

Glenn Tempest

Breaking new ground

In August and September this year, prominent Australian mountaineer and *Wild* Contributing Editor Greg Mortimer is leading an expedition sponsored by *Wild* to one of the world's highest unclimbed mountains—Chongtar (7350 metres) in the northern Karakoram not far from K2. Joining the four-member team will be legendary Australian rockclimber John Ewbank, recently unretired from climbing. The team hopes to complete an alpine-style ascent of this heavily crevassed and avalanche-prone mountain by mid-September.

At about the same time a small group of Australian climbers will be attempting the first ascent of Chandra Parbat I. This 6739 metre peak lies on the Suralaya Glacier and is the highest unclimbed summit in the Gangotri region of India, which has until recently been closed to western climbers.

GT

Shipton-Tilman award

Hobart-based mountaineer Ken McConnell has become the first Australian to receive the prestigious Shipton-Tilman grant. McConnell, who has participated in 22 expeditions, will use the \$US6000 award to explore and attempt to climb the major unclimbed peak Chakragil (6800 metres) in the Kashgar Range in Central Asia.

Highest honour

New Zealander Rob Hall has been awarded an MBE for services to mountaineering in the most recent Queen's Birthday Honours list. In May this year Hall reached the summit of Everest for the second time and bagged neighbouring Lhotse (8511 metres) shortly after as part of a commercial expedition.

GW

Safer paddling

The sixth International White Water Safety Seminar will be held in North Wales (UK) during November. A great deal of information relating to current safety procedures and recent equipment developments for white-water canoeists will be available. The Australian representatives at the seminar hope to hold a national seminar in Canberra during 1995 to help to pass on knowledge gained at the international conference. Watch this space for further developments. ■

John Wilde

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, VIC 3181.

Wild Diary

Information about rucksack-sports events for publication in this department should be sent to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, VIC 3181.

September	17	12-hour Rogaine	ACT	(06) 249 5597
		12-hour Spring R	SA	(08) 258 5696
	17-18	24-hour Spring R	Vic	(05) 74 7576
October		Teletest S	NSW	(03) 720 4647
	1-8	Sprint & Marathon C	Qld	(07) 405 0900
	4-7	Shi & Outdoor Trade Show (trade only)	ACT	(03) 482 1206
	8-9	Introductory sea kayak course	NSW	(06) 94 1366
		Victorian Climbing Club (VCC) beginners' course (week one) RC	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	15-18	Australian Championships R	NSW	(042) 85 4053
	22	6-hour Spring R	Vic	(05) 74 7576
	22-23	Hawkesbury Classic Paddle C	NSW	(02) 520 5634
November	29-1 Nov	Four Peaks Climb B	Vic	(05) 57 1507
		Basic skills instructor course C	NSW	(02) 958 6908
	4-6	AICGA Adrenalize Open competition C	Vic	018 324 336
	5-6	Proficiency testing C	NSW	(02) 809 6993
		VCC beginners' course (week two) RC	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	12	12-hour Spring R	Vic	(05) 74 7576
	13	Third Victorian Mountain Running Championships	Vic	(05) 74 7576
	26-27	VCC beginners' course (week three) RC	Vic	(03) 428 5298
December	3-4	Sea kayak proficiency	NSW	(064) 93 4036
		Mountains to City Challenge M	Vic	(03) 551 5655
	27-31	Red Cross Murray Marathon C	Vic	(03) 685 9813

1995

February	10-11	Spirit's Coast to Coast M	NZ	(64) 38 26 5493
March	19	6-hour Autumn R	Vic	(05) 74 7576
April	8-9	VCC beginners' course (week one) RC	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	15-22	Canoe Polo	Vic	(03) 882 2115
	22-23	VCC beginners' course (week two) RC	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	22-25	Escalade 95 mountain festival C	NSW	(047) 87 1480
May	6-7	VCC beginners' course (week three) RC	Vic	(03) 428 5298
	14-15	Australian Championships R		(06) 249 5597

B bushwacking C canoeing R rogaining RC rockclimbing M multisports S skiing

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International action to clean up wild places

Fouling our own nest

The *Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme* (UIAA), the umbrella organization covering the world's mountaineering and climbing bodies, has established a Mountain Protection Commission to monitor and attack the problems associated with recreational use of mountain areas. The commission's first programme will target the issue of rubbish disposal by climbing and trekking parties, a problem which has reached enormous proportions in many of the world's most spectacular mountain regions, including the much publicized pollution of parts of the Himalayas. Many *Wild* readers will be aware of the disgraceful legacy of discarded food, equipment, toilet waste, contaminated medical supplies and even human remains that now litter the highest mountains of the world, a number of which have been subject to grandiose—and largely ineffectual—attempts to clean them up. For every climber active on a major mountain, however, there must be scores of trekkers—and hundreds of locals whose livelihoods are increasingly dependent on the tourist dollar—in the valleys below, all placing their own stresses on the fragile environments through which they pass. It is a seemingly insoluble coincidence that the popularity of trekking and climbing environments is directly related to their fragility and remoteness.

But the environmental impact of recreational wilderness users is not restricted to exotic foreign locales. In the Gear Survey on water purification methods in this issue of *Wild* the growing problem of contaminated water in Australia's mountains is discussed. The worrying problem of giardia is rapidly spreading throughout Australia's most popular outdoor destinations—and not just in the vicinity of 'day-trip' camping grounds and picnic areas. Both the Australian Alps and Tasmania's rugged Western Arthur Range are feeling the increasing pressure of 'wilderness walkers', and discarded cans, tin foil and plastic are becoming ubiquitous at bush campsites.

The Mountain Protection Commission's target programme 'Waste Disposal and Avoiding Trash' addresses these issues by recommending such commonsense steps as travelling lighter, planning for the removal of problem waste, and proper toilet practices. An alternative approach to such self-regulation is the sinister possibility of regulation and restriction of our wilderness activities by governments and other authorities; a tightly controlled permit system already operates for many of the most popular walking tracks in New Zealand and similar controls are on the agenda in Tasmania (see later item). While few would question the need to restrict the number of walkers passing through these delicate areas, one wonders whether such moves could be delayed—or even rendered

unnecessary—elsewhere by the informed, conscientious actions of everyone who ventures into the bush.

Green tourism's 'free ride'

The Australian Conservation Foundation has attacked the tourism industry for getting a 'free ride' on the back of environmentalists' efforts to protect Australian wilderness. The Vice-president of the ACE, Penny Figgis, has pointed out that many of the Australian tourist industry's top draw-cards—such as Kakadu and the Queensland wet tropics—were won through long and bitter campaigns by environmentalists and without any assistance from tourism operators or organizations.

Now that the industry is reaping the benefits of these victories, the ACF believes that it should stand up and be counted as an ally of the environmental movement in attempting to improve the management of these areas and win protection for further slices of wilderness rather than restrict itself to merely packaging and marketing existing assets.

Recycled paper thrown out

Australian Paper, the company formed by last September's merger of APM and APPM, has reportedly withdrawn both of its 100 per cent recycled, unbleached printing papers from sale. Plans for a 200 000 tonnes per annum paper recycling mill at Shoalhaven have also reportedly been scrapped.

Australian Paper's parent company Amcor now holds a virtual monopoly on the Australian paper manufacturing, distribution, stationery, greeting card, and packaging market. See Action Box item 1.

Greenpeace changes

The International Executive Director of Greenpeace, Australian Paul Gilding, resigned in May after policy differences with the board of Greenpeace International. Gilding, who was formerly the head of Greenpeace Australia, is believed to have disagreed with the board over the speed of ongoing reform in the structure of the organization.

Locally, Greenpeace is to wind up its door-knock canvassing operations, which have been uneconomic and increasingly ineffective in winning donations and new members.

QUEENSLAND

'Skyrail' to go ahead

The controversial Cairns-Kuranda Skyrail cable-car project in the Barron Gorge National Park is to go ahead after the federal Environment Minister John Faulkner approved the project in May. Opponents of the scheme had been hoping for Federal Government intervention to stop the project,



Monica Chapman does her bit to clean up our wild places, Mt Howitt, Victoria. *John Chapman*

which is to run through World Heritage protected rain forest. The People Against Kuranda Skyrail intend to blockade construction of the cable-car, which was due to begin in July. See Action Box item 2.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Coffs Harbour ocean outfall

Coffs Harbour residents and environmentalists have been engaged in a three-year battle with the Coffs Harbour City Council and the Department of Public Works over plans to build a sewage outfall at Look-at-me-now Headland, Emerald Beach. The outfall is intended to dispose of sewage from the Northern Beaches area of Coffs Harbour.

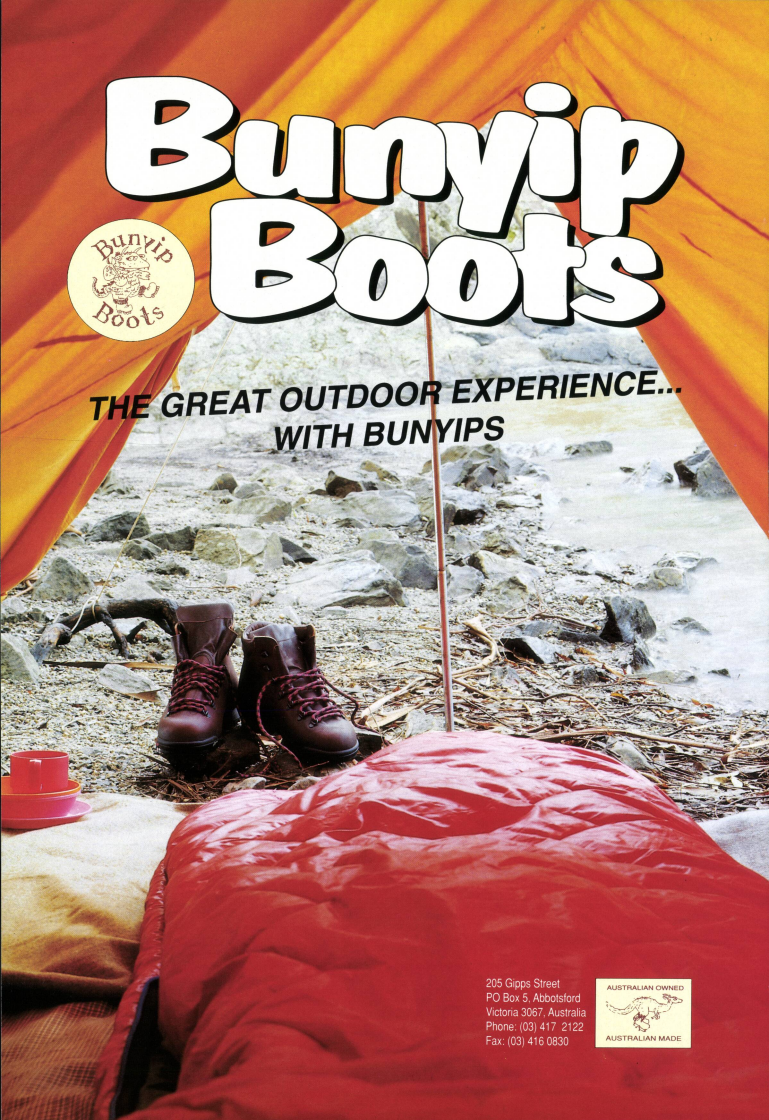
The area surrounding the headland is an important confluence between waters from the tropics and the colder Southern Ocean, each with their typical marine species; it marks the most southerly extent of significant coral growth on the east coast and is part of the Solitary Islands Marine Reserve. The headland also abuts the Moonee Beach Nature Reserve, making it one of the most highly protected areas along that strip of coast. In addition, the local Aboriginal Land Council has identified a number of sites of cultural significance on the headland.

The headland was purchased a number of years ago by the State Government so that it could be included in the reserve; instead, an easement has been declared through which

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the pipeline will run. Initial work on the outfall was halted two and a half years ago following the arrest of over 200 people at protests against the scheme and a court decision that the local council had contravened its own environmental plan. The land was subsequently rezoned and, despite overwhelming objections submitted to an environmental impact statement and Commission of Inquiry, the project is to go ahead.

More old-growth forest to get the chop

Environment groups were outraged at the granting in July of an interim export wood-chip licence to Boral Ltd's sawmilling subsidiary, which will take the wood from forests which include designated wilderness areas in north-east NSW. The granting of the interim licence by federal Resources Minister David Beddall, precedes a decision on whether or not to issue an extended one-year licence.



The Coalition Against Ocean Outfalls and the Friends of Look-at-me-now, who are co-ordinating opposition to the project, have won the support of the likes of Tasmanian Green Bob Brown, Ian Kiernan of Clean Up Australia and former federal Environment Minister Graeme Richardson. See Action Box item 3.

Blue Mountains falls threatened

Environmental protection measures in the Blue Mountains are in tatters after the Land and Environment Court approved the development of a huge, 'warehouse-like' building over the headwaters of the famous Mini Ha Ha Falls in Katoomba. Despite overwhelming opposition from residents and the Blue Mountains City Council, the court has approved the construction of a 600-seat church and adjoining 148-space car-park over swamp land that feeds the Yosemite Creek, of which the falls are a part.

The decision is seen as a major blow to the Blue Mountains Local Environment Plan 1991 and an extraordinary slight to local planners, councillors and residents, almost all of whom opposed the church's construction.

Jervis Bay victory

Environmentalists welcomed the Federal Government's decision in April not to recommend Jervis Bay as its preferred site for the relocation of the Royal Australian Navy's armaments depot. Following the decision, the government announced its intention to include 6000 hectares of bushland and private land adjacent to the bay in a new park and rehabilitate land degraded by private use and four-wheel-driving.

A month earlier, the State minister responsible for the forestry industry, George Souris, had declared that he would introduce 'resource security' legislation covering NSW hardwood exploitation to State Parliament in September. This move came despite the demise of similar legislation at federal level and evidence from other States that this approach does nothing to encourage value adding or to protect forestry jobs.

Wild Spaces

The Wilderness Society will hold its second annual *Wild Spaces* meeting in early November. The programme, which last year included guest speakers and a video launch, is likely to focus on the Lake Pedder and Warragamba Dam issues. See Action Box item 4.

VICTORIA

Going soft on native logging

Timber production in softwood plantations is growing rapidly but the potential economic benefits of this trend are being ignored by the government, according to Judy Clark of Environment Victoria (formerly the Conservation Council of Victoria). A meeting of representatives of environmental and other interest groups, including Tasmanian Green Bob Brown, heard that growth of the softwood plantation industry will certainly outstrip woefully inadequate government projections and provide opportunities for new jobs and regional development. (See the Editorial in *Wild* no 49.)

At present, 30 per cent of Australia's sawn timber is imported from New Zealand. Local softwood plantations could easily replace this

supply and continue to eat into markets now dominated by native hardwood. The economics of farming timber in plantations make this approach dramatically cheaper than continuing to log native old-growth forests. This has been reflected by the steady decline of the native forest industry over the past 20 years in contrast to growing investment in softwood plantations.

In late May, a report by economic consultants BIS Shrapnel indicated that the softwood industry in NSW would continue to provide jobs and revenue to rural communities long after native forest logging had become uneconomic. (The economics of softwood plantation logging were described in some detail in the Editorial in *Wild* no 49.)

Governments, however, appear to be so intent on continuing to support the faltering native forest industry that they are likely to capitalize on the impending boom in softwood plantations. Throughout May, Victorian Environment Minister Mark Birrell engaged in protracted argument with Green representatives in the Letters column of the Melbourne Age over the economics of native forest logging, continuing to ignore the findings of the State Auditor-general which indicated that support for the industry was costing the State millions of dollars annually.

Facts emerge on log downgrading

Almost half the hardwood logs coming from Victoria's native forests are incorrectly

Action Box

Readers can take action on the following matters covered in Green Pages in this issue.

1 Write to Don McFarlane, Managing Director, Amcor Paper Group, 626 Heidelberg Rd, Alphington, Vic 3078. Also write to federal Environment Minister John Faulkner, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600.

2 For further information, contact Melissa on (070) 53 3735 or write to PAKS at PO Box 664, Smithfield, Qld 4878.

3 For further information, write to the Coalition Against Ocean Outfalls, 41 Dammerel Cres, Emerald Beach, NSW 2456 or join Friends of Look-at-me-now, 57 Dammerel Cres, Emerald Beach, NSW 2456.

4 Contact the Wilderness Society on (02) 267 7929.

5 For further information, contact the Victorian National Parks Association on (03) 650 8296.

6 The Mt Stirling Development Task Force, which is co-ordinating opposition to the government's plans, can be contacted through Alan Kerr on (057) 75 2994 after hours.

7 The Residents Opposed to the Cable Car can be contacted at 102 Bathurst St, Hobart, Tas 7000.

8 Interested mainland walkers can write to John Chapman, GPO Box 598D, Melbourne, Vic 3001.

9 For more information, contact Noni Keys at the Greenpeace Pacific Campaign office in Canberra on (06) 257 6516.

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graded, a State Government audit revealed in June. Of these, most are downgraded to become wood-chip fodder, some 'for no apparent reason' according to the report. Methods of grading logs were painted as woefully inadequate.

The Wilderness Society's Fenella Barry described the findings as proof that pressure from the wood-chip industry is causing quality saw-logs to be wrongly graded in order to feed the industry's demand for low-grade logs. It called for the cancellation of export wood-chipping licences and a complete overhaul of the way in which native forests are managed.

The government, which is already propping up the native forest industry by millions of dollars every year, was denied up to \$1 million a year in royalties by the misgrading.



The Wilderness Society's Victorian campaign co-ordinator, Fenella Barry. Julian Meehan

Forest discord

An aircraft belonging to famous jazz musician Vince Jones was probably vandalized in June, an incident linked to Jones's outspoken stance on logging in East Gippsland, where the trumpeter/singer lives.

Iron filings, which could have caused an accident, were found in the oil filter of Jones's private plane at the same time as the message 'Greens cost jobs' appeared on the windscreen of his car.

Carrot and the stick

The Wilderness Society has condemned plans by the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources to poison wallabies identified by the DCNR as responsible for low regeneration rates in clear-felled logging coupes in East Gippsland. The society asserts that less than 12 per cent of seedling deaths are the result of cropping by wallabies and that the poor regeneration rates—as low as 20 per cent—are the result of bad management practices.

A DCNR internal document which recently studied the problem of poor regeneration rates pointed the finger not at hungry wallabies but at '...deficiencies in coupe scheduling and supervision, inadequate 'single recipe' silvicultural techniques and operational inflexibilities arising from wood supply contractual arrangements and annual budget cycles'. (Wild's italics.)

In June, endangered Orbost spiny crayfish were discovered in East Gippsland's Ellery

Creek, where logging is to proceed shortly. Despite assurances by the DCNR that a two kilometre long, 100 metre wide buffer zone will be left around the creek, there are concerns about the effect logging-related siltation and increased run-off will have on the creatures, which have only been identified on two previous occasions.

Uncontrolled burns

On 27 April ABC Radio reported that two bushfires had been started in the Grampians when officially sanctioned 'controlled burns' became uncontrolled. Custodian of the Grampians National Park, the DCNR, managed to torch 6000 hectares of bush in the Moora Reservoir area while a separate fire, reportedly started on private property, consumed a further 2000 hectares in the Black Range.

Another DCNR fire, this time near Bemm River in East Gippsland, burnt out of control for a week in March. This came just days after a pitched battle by a Cann River resident to prevent forest adjoining her property from being burnt by DCNR officers—who had reportedly just assured her that the forest in question was on a 14-year burn cycle—for the fourth time since 1980.

Corporate trendiness

One feature of recent years has been the apparently miraculous transformation of just about every Victorian government department from idle and wasteful bureaucracy to high-flying corporate superstardom. Our own DCNR has not been slow to mount this turbo-charged, mobile-phone-equipped bandwagon.

Its 1993-96 Corporate Plan shows that the DCNR is pushing to develop and market our bush as a tourist commodity. In this connection, it uses comfortingly ambiguous phrases such as 'provision of improved access' and 'infrastructure developments linked with the natural environment'. Of even greater concern, however, are more specific proposals: 'Opportunities...for external funding from the private sector (eg sponsorship) will be identified and pursued'—Wilsons Promontory National Park to be renamed McDonalds Theme Park and Mt Bogong renamed Mt Melbourne Bitter, perhaps? We are promised more walking tracks and other facilities in National Parks and reserves and 'Implementation of a targeted program of upgrading road and track access to enhance the range of opportunities for car-based (4WD, 2WD) touring and enjoyment of the parks...Development of appropriate visitor facilities, including cabin accommodation associated with long distance trails and walking tracks...[and] business plans prepared for key areas.'

Degradation without consultation

The Victorian Government is seeking to 'fast track' plans to build a radio tower on Mt Kent, one of the most significant and unspoiled peaks in the Victorian Alps. Close to Snowy Bluff and Moroka Gorge in the Wonnagatta-Moroka region, Mt Kent has been an important bushwalking destination for decades. A similar tower is planned for nearby Minogues Look-out, near Bryces Gorge. The

government has sought to justify the towers on the grounds that they are needed to improve rescue communications. See Action Box item 5.

Mountaineers for Mt Stirling

On the wet night of 24 June a capacity audience of 300 turned out in Melbourne and paid \$10 a head to register their opposition to the proposed development of Mt Stirling as a downhill ski resort, as reported in *Wild* no 53. They heard an all-star cast of speakers—Peter Hillary, Graeme Joy, Tim Macartney-Snape and Eric Phillips—who spoke passionately of the need to preserve Mt Stirling. The speakers donated their time to the meeting; the compere was *Wild* Managing Editor, Chris Baxter.

The controversy over the secrecy with which development proposals were concocted has continued, with Fol documents revealing that Tourism Victoria and the Alpine Resorts Commission collaborated to keep news of the latest proposals for Mt Stirling from leaking out in the lead-up to Mansfield council elections.

Meanwhile, the Ski Touring Association of Victoria has been deafening in its silence over the Mt Stirling wrangle. It seems extraordinary that after almost 20 years of speculation about a downhill resort on the mountain—plenty of time, one would think, in which to decide on a position—the STAV seems to have so little to say about the planned, and well publicized, destruction of one of the State's premier ski touring assets.

Attention has also been drawn to the final recommendations of the Land Conservation Council's 1979 and 1983 investigations into land use in Victoria's alpine areas, which assert that development of Mt Stirling should not be considered until resorts such as Mt Buller have been developed to optimum capacity—something which has not yet occurred and, given recent trends in visitor numbers, is never likely to be economic. See Action Box item 6 for further information.

Whose mountain?

Ski instructors have reportedly been banned from instructing their pupils within the ARC-controlled resort area at Falls Creek. Instructors using the popular and convenient Nordic Bowl have been told to take themselves and their charges all the way to the far side of the Rocky Valley Dam wall. Serious concerns have been raised at the safety of the decision, given the danger posed to novice pupils returning from this relatively exposed location in foul weather. Two 'authorized' instruction schools are the only exceptions to this 'no-instruction' dictate.

The ARC has apparently further decreed that cross-country skiers headed for the high country beyond the resort must *remove their skis and walk* across the ARC 'compound' or pay the \$7.00 trail fee that applies to all groomed trails in Victoria.

Wilderness Gear Show

The Wilderness Society will be presenting The Outdoor Gear Show at Box Hill Town Hall on 13 November. The show, the first of its kind, will feature exhibits by outdoor retailers, adventure travel vendors and bushwalking



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TASMANIA

(Another) World Heritage feud

New federal Environment Minister John Faulkner raised the ire of the Tasmanian logging industry and the Tasmanian Labor Party by declaring his intention to extend World Heritage Areas in Tasmania and phase out export wood-chipping by the turn of the century. The ability of the minister to turn these intentions—which were part of his positively if cautiously accepted environmental statement in late June—into action remains to be seen.

Keenly contested

Opponents of increasingly shaky but still kicking State Government proposals to encourage the construction of a cable-car up the scenic slopes of the Mt Wellington Organ Pipes have enlisted the help of another of Hobart's major landmarks. The 100-year-old 'Keens Curry' sign—composed of arranged, white-painted rocks—that adorns a hillside above South Hobart has been temporarily seconded to the cause. See photo, and Action Box item 7 for more information.

Grant Dixon

Pedder saved?

An international campaign to restore the drowned Lake Pedder, scene of Australia's first national conservation battle and once the jewel in Tasmania's wilderness crown, was launched by British conservationist David Bellamy and Tasmania's Bob Brown on 18 April. See the Lake Pedder article in this issue.

Tasmanian walking track proposals

A public consultation meeting was held on 10 July at Ross in central Tasmania to discuss the Proposed Walking Track Management Strategy Plan for the World Heritage Area. About 30 people attended, mostly bushwalkers who provided some lively and informative debate about current track usage and the future of the walking tracks in Tasmania, some of which are showing considerable signs of erosion. Most agreed that restrictions on numbers will be needed in some areas and a permit system was proposed to achieve this aim.

Those present were also asked to nominate representatives for a Working Party whose major task will be to decide how and where to impose restrictions and, if needed, a permit system. A wide diversity of interests will be represented including two mainland bushwalkers. I was proposed as one of them. Independent mainland bushwalkers can write directly to me if they wish to have some involvement and input into the process. The other mainland walker will represent bushwalking clubs.

While permits are likely to be introduced, the National Parks Service is to be commended for involving the interest groups so that at least an equitable and sensible system for users can be designed and implemented. See Action Box item 8.

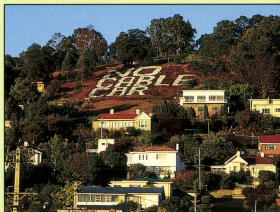
John Chapman

GREEN PAGES

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Sell out?

The State Government has conceded that South Australia's parks and reserves are underfunded, but is considering boosting revenue by imposing 'user levies' or even selling some parks. A government report recommended that an urgent audit be made of the State's natural reserves. Possible revenue-raising measures proposed in the report included levies on outdoor recreation equipment and the sale of land with 'little or no conservation value'.



Visible opposition to the Mt Wellington cable-car on a South Hobart hillside. *Grant Dixon*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Forest blockade

Members of the Wilderness Society and the Western Australian Forest Alliance imposed a blockade on forestry operations in old-growth forest in the vicinity of Pemberton in the State's south-west in July. This is the first time opponents of wood-chip exploitation of these unique forests have taken such direct action in WA.

OVERSEAS

AIDS and the forest

Chemical compounds that may be able to halt the spread of the HIV virus have been identified in samples taken from the bintangor tree which lives in the forests of the Malaysian State of Sarawak. The Sarawak forests have been the subject of enormous controversy over tropical timber logging, opponents of which have continued to point out the enormous potential for the discovery of new drugs in these huge bioresources.

Like parent, like child?

A recent report into forestry practices in Papua New Guinea has shown that the industry is riddled with corruption and unaccountable forest practices. A PNG judicial inquiry described the logging industry as 'rapacious' and warned that the country's vast forests could be logged out within ten years. See Action Box item 9. ■

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

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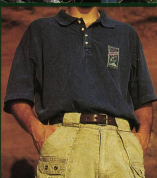
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As you squeezed billies, stove and fuel-bottle into an already overbrimming pack; or as you juggled and struggled with spitting, bubbling, boiling-hot water and ever expanding loads of dehydrated in the steamy, dripping vestibule of your tent; or as you emerged from another lengthy meal preparation to catch yet again just the last glimmers of the fantastic sunset that, head down in your pots, you just missed, did you ever wonder: 'Do I really need all this cooking stuff?'

The answer, of course, is that you don't.

A wonderful array of tasty, sustaining, lightweight and quickly prepared goodies awaits the stoveless camper. Stove free works for lots of reasons. You save time; in the mornings to be up and about; at noon to walk/ski/swim/photograph/admire; and in the evening to relax or explore. You save weight and space, and your meals may well be more delicious, imaginative and nutritious.

And there are no greasy saucepans the next morning! Stove free is particularly well suited to the cooler regions and seasons in Australia, where the extra crispy, crunchy, fresh delicacies—which can now be fitted into your pack upon expulsion of the old stove and pans—keep fresher longer.

The basic principles of stoveless camping are the same as for cooking camping. The foods you carry should be tasty, nutritionally balanced and contain a minimum of water. The difference comes in selecting those foods which will rehydrate without needing to be cooked, or which can be eaten as they are.

The best way to illustrate the possibilities of camping without a stove is to present a list of suggestions. By no means exhaustive, this list may be added to, mixed and matched according to your own circumstances, region, preferences and unlimited imagination. (Have a browse round the shelves of a good whole-foods shop—lots of possibilities there!)

You, too, will be laughing at the prospect of leaving your stove at home and getting stuck into some of these healthy goodies. Rob Blakers

The list that follows is in a very general 'meal-wise' order, but you may (like me) occasionally incline more to a lighter, more easily digestible 'breakfast' in the evening, or to a more sustainably hearty 'dinner' in the morning in preparation for a big day ahead in the mountains.

One note: base your nutrition on whole foods of substance. In particular, take foods containing complex carbohydrates, fats and proteins. As far as possible, avoid or minimize sugar and other sweet things (commercial muesli bars, chocolate). Such foods, and especially those containing refined sugar, give you a short, unbalancing burst of energy but then leave you listless and tired; a condition at best uncomfortable, and at worst potentially dangerous in a survival situation.

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Photo Glenn van der Knijff



The merest beginnings of a stoveless cuisine

Cereals

From Vita-Brits to bran-flakes, rice-bubbles (whole grain, of course) to dried, sprouted barley grain or heavy-duty, pre-soakable muesli. Try also couscous—absolutely delicious. (This needs soaking for a few hours, but no cooking is required.) Couscous can be sweet or savoury depending on what you add to it.

Milk powders

There's more to milk than meets the eye. As well as cow's milk (full cream or skim), try soy milk (several varieties are available—all taste entirely different), coconut milk or malted milk (a sweet one). Mix them.

Carob powder

A little like cocoa—though higher in protein—without caffeine, and naturally just a little sweet. Add it to the different varieties of milk.

Lecithin

This comes from the soy bean. A natural emulsifier; tasty when sprinkled lightly on cereals.

Soy grits

A little plain by themselves, but a very high protein addition (soaked) to a milky breakfast.

Dried fruits

Not too sweet. Anything from banana to fig to mango and papaw. Soak in a cup of water overnight for a morning fruit juice.

Nuts

The lot (according to budget)! Try pre-roasted sunflower seeds and pepitas (pumpkin seeds). When pre-roasting, just brown lightly then, while still hot, add a little soy sauce to taste.

Breads

Of all descriptions. Whole wheat, rye, sour dough, pumpernickel, oatmeal, savoury cornbread, fruit breads and raisin loaves, flat breads and bread rolls. Wholemeal croissants and doughnuts! Hot cross buns in season. Bring a variety on any trip.

Dry crackers and biscuits

Zillions are available—try them all. Rye crackers, rice cakes (carob-coated rice cakes are particularly scrumptious).

Spreads

Tahini (sesame paste), peanut butter... cashew butter! Margarine or butter, miso, Vegemite, chutneys, rice malt, maple syrup and other sweet spreads.

Fresh fruit

Not too much of this; just for the crunchiness. According to taste and season. Organic is tastier, more nutritious and stays fresh longer.

Fresh vegetables

For instance, tomato, lettuce, capsicum, cucumber, carrot. Select as for fruits. Maybe just a stove-weight's worth.

Sprouts

Alfalfa, mung, lentils—the ultimate in freshness! Keep wrapped up in muslin and rinse daily, or more often if hot.

Cheeses

Of all varieties. Don't forget cream cheeses, cottage cheese or soy cheese.

Corn chips

Or even potato chips! They weigh nothing and are a nice change.

Savoury loaves

Pre-cooked meal foundations. Constructed at home and kept cool. A chewy mix of, for example, crumbled tofu, tomato paste, wheat germ, tahini, nuts, miso, herbs to taste and a little gluten or soy flour and water to hold it all together.

Cakes and biscuits

Real cakes and home-grown bikkies. Made from whole flours, nuts, soya grits and coconut. Fruit cakes, oat cakes, lemon cakes, orange and ginger cakes, carrot and zucchini cakes, rich carob, walnut and cherry cakes with tofu-cream filling and banana pistachio icing!

Nibbles

To your imaginative limits!



An apple a day may keep the doctor away but it looks like this fish's goose is cooked. David Noble

Most of these things will keep well for a week or more. On warm days, wrap fresh foods and cooked loaves deep in your pack while travelling, and under your sleeping-bag or outside in a cool place on a tenting day. Don't let them freeze overnight in the mountains in winter. On each trip, and on different trips, try a wide variety of foods—a key to appetizing meals.

It should be noted that a stove may be useful in emergencies. However, prevention is better than cure. In potentially chilling weather or situations, a prudent approach and good gear will minimize the possibility of a dangerous thermal state even beginning to arise.

In the high mountains in winter a stove may be required to melt snow for water.

And stove free will not, for obvious reasons, please the tea-drinking walker.

These conditions aside—try it! Stove free has been very happily field-tested by the

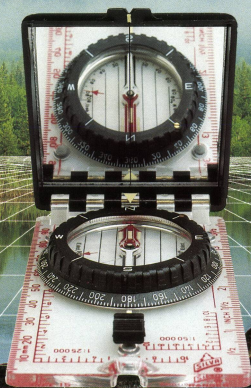
author over half a decade or so, on trips of up to ten days' duration. It has worked successfully in all seasons walking, rafting, skiing and climbing in the wild, beautiful western Tasmanian wilderness.

Save fossil fuels. Carry less weight and bulk. Eat better, and have more get up and go. And, perhaps most importantly, have more time to savour, enjoy and explore the wild places to which our love of the wilderness takes us. ■

Rob Blakers came to Tasmania for a three-week visit in 1980 and then felt unable to leave. He has spent much of the 14 years since exploring the State's remarkable wilderness by raft, foot and ski.

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JOURNEYS WITH MAPS

After some 14 years' publication we've decided that it's time to introduce a regular columnist to *Wild*. In each issue one of Australia's best-known—and best—outdoor writers, *Quentin Chester*, will reflect on the more unusual things that make 'going bush' distinctive or memorable. This is the first edition of what will be his regular column, *The Wild Life*.



They are carried on every serious bush journey. Large and laden with information, they are inscribed with symbols, names, numbers, capillaries of blue and masses of concentric loops. These exquisite creations are the product of extensive surveys and painstaking drawing. Yet without our capacity to interpret and visualize, they are of little value. Only by understanding their esoteric graphic idioms do they become charts of our imaginations.

For anyone who makes a habit of venturing forth into untracked country, maps are compelling documents. Beyond their function as representations of a parcel of landscape, they are what we use to divine the secrets of a place. They show enough of the terrain to excite our curiosity—but it is what they can't

show that spurs us into action. Will that constriction of contours turn out to be a cliffline? Does that serpentine creek cut through a gorge? Will that secluded creek-flat accommodate three tents? Is the view from the summit going to be as impressive as it looks? For the outdoor traveller, maps hold the promise of treasure, not buried in a chest but manifest in nature.

My fascination with maps began early. The wall above my childhood bed was almost entirely covered by an immense map of the world. Printed in bright colours on linen, it was suspended from a picture hook on two long, wooden dowels. Even back then it was somewhat out of date: now, with the recent eruptions in global politics, it would be hopelessly obsolete.

How many maps have been spread out on this well-used hut table? *Glenn Tempest*

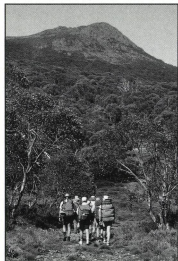
But my real interest was not so much with the map's geopolitical information as with the crinkled shapes of the continents and the spatial relationships between them. The map was the stimulus for idle contemplation about exotic locales I knew only as names in a book. I used to lie there with Africa hanging over my head, Australia at my navel and Patagonia curving down to my toes. During indolent moments I would nudge the thing with my foot and watch it swing overhead. Occasionally a dusty, two-dimensional world came crashing down on top of me.

This intimacy with the continents made me inquisitive about whatever maps came my

BUSHWALKING MAPS

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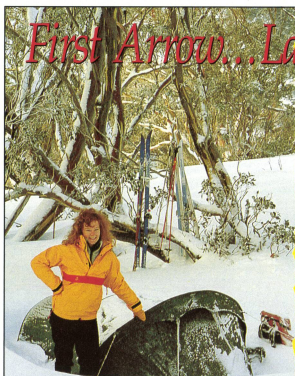
Our maps can be obtained from many newsagents and bookshops, camping outlets, National Parks & Wildlife Service, or direct from the Land Information Centre.

For further information, and your free 'Catalogue of NSW Maps', write to Land Information Centre, PO Box 143, Bathurst, NSW 2795, or phone (063) 32 8200, fax (063) 31 8095. Send \$2.00 for a copy of the CMA Map Reading Guide.

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near this big
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way. The family atlas afforded me hours of entertainment. Similarly, the best things about my father's subscription to *National Geographic*, apart from pictures of unadorned tribeswomen, were the 'Oblique Mercator Projections' from the society's cartographic division. On motoring holidays I pored over the wad of BP road-maps in the glove box of our FE station-wagon. It was also around this time that I used to thrill to the opening titles of *Bonanza* as flames radiated out of a map of Ponderosa country.

However, it wasn't until I started bushwalking several years later that I began to apprehend the power of maps to render topography. Rather than being abstract depictions of continents, such maps are elaborate metaphors for the land itself. In the field they become living documents that merge with one's physical perceptions of a place. During the course of each walking day, the map is studied and gazed at. Bearings are taken, courses plotted and spaces filled with annotations. By the end of a trip the map has become inextricable from your experience of the landscape.

But the power of maps is not confined to the field. Hours spent sifting through your files at home can release a surge of memories: the peaks scaled and saddles crossed, the campsites and water-holes, the storms endured and the friendships made—and sometimes broken. The mere act of having a map unfolded can also generate ideas for new expeditions. Indeed, a trip never really takes shape until you have studied the maps. All the pleasure of planning any outing is plotting your route and anticipating the terrain suggested by all the colourful hieroglyphics.

These days we are used to tapping into a wealth of information about walking areas. There is widespread coverage of 1:50,000 sheets detailing most regions. But it was not always so easy. Less than 60 years ago, many areas were little known. The maps, if they existed at all, were patchy in detail and often woefully inaccurate. It was bushwalkers who helped to plot the intricacies of the terrain. They added nuances and gave names to prominent features. Myles Dunphy was the most diligent of these map makers. He drew 26 maps for publication and sketched many more. As well as being a means of sharing his knowledge of an area, these maps were seen by Dunphy as a powerful weapon in the push for the creation of National Parks.

Some walkers still prepare their own maps of favourite areas but few would rival the scope and charm of the Dunphy maps. Several of these grace my own collection. After a few years of outdoor travel it is not hard to build up a sizeable quantity of maps, which poses problems of storage and handling. Do you stuff bundles into cupboards, arrange them in filing cabinets or go the whole way and install purpose-built drawers?

An acquaintance of mine is the custodian of a collection so large that it occupies most of a room. There are walls lined with filing cabinets and every corner is filled with PVC and cardboard tubes. Maps are bluetacked to walls and spread across desks like layers of filo pastry. When I visit it's hard to avoid marks cartographic. An innocent remark about a proposed trip can lead to a prolonged

session rummaging through drawers and tubes in search of the relevant sheet. We are inevitably side-tracked into regions not remotely connected to my intended destination. My suggestions that he make a map of his map collection have been ignored. I suspect that he secretly enjoys the muddle. He says he buys maps to many areas 'just in case I want to go there some day'.

Given their mesmerizing power, is it any wonder that many bushwalkers tend to regard their maps with respect verging on reverence? They are neatly folded and carried in natty map cases. Some people have their maps laminated with plastic film though personally I like the feel of the paper and the ease of scrawling notes in pen or pencil.

Indeed, I have been accused of being cavalier in my treatment of maps. This might be because I eschew the use of protective cases and instead carry maps down the front of my shorts or tucked between my belt pouch and an increasingly ample girth. Thus the map is readily accessible and easily unfolded when required though admittedly it does get a bit knocked about by perspiration, rain, dust, spilt drinks and the like. (Murphy's Law as it applies to maps states that the really critical information will be right on a badly creased fold line.)

The more fastidious of my walking companions are rightly appalled by such slovenly treatment of what, to them, are documents seemingly as sacred as the Dead Sea Scrolls. I am now accustomed to their admonishing stares when I withdraw a rumpled and steamy sheet of paper from near my navel and attempt to sound authoritative about the direction we should follow.

My maps might rapidly acquire a patina of age but they don't look half as distressed as a walker I once met on a track near Kanagara Tops in the Blue Mountains. This poor chap had mislaid his map case and compass somewhere down the track earlier in the day. I made some reassuring noises as he sat resting with his head in his hands, but he was inconsolable. Apparently these articles had accompanied him on numerous journeys in the area and the map bore masses of notes about his times in the region. There's nothing for it—I will have to come back and look for them', he said mournfully.

This kind of reaction is not as unusual as one might think. For some people the attachment is so strong that maps are regarded as extensions of the self. Others peruse and admire their maps as though they were works of art. There are homes where framed charts of favourite haunts hang in pride of place on living-room walls. In a high country hut a skier once confided to me that he had dreams for a café where the walls would be decorated by mountain photographs and every table would be topped by a map of a wilderness area set under glass. 'You might have problems with customer turnover', I suggested. 'I guess so. But wouldn't it be great, you could eat your meal and plan your trips at the same time', he enthused.

Of course, such obsessive interest is not universal. There are walkers who treat maps as strictly utilitarian devices to be consulted only when other route-finding skills have been exhausted. Some contend that maps

betray the secrets of a place and dilute the delights of making one's own discoveries. This is perhaps true of some sketch-maps which tediously detail every campsite and feature of interest. There is a fine line between having enough knowledge to enjoy an area and letting the facts get in the way of a good time.

This conundrum has been explored by Frank Moorhouse, our most nimble chronicler of the demarcations between the public domain and that of private fiction. His story 'Masculinity Index', which gives an account of bushwalking in the Budawang, is both an eager compilation of facts and historical snippets about the area and a querulous commentary on the 'verbal debris' left by explorers and map makers. (Poor old Myles Dunphy is invoked as one of the 'villains of naming'.) The narrator of the story yearns to 'move in the bush without maps or names or destination or time' yet later is described using his map and compass, avidly recording his progress and comments on index cards and attaching names of his own to landmarks.

There is an exploratory urge within most of us; a desire to make our own findings. Australians are fortunate to live on a continent where you can still visit places that are not lumbered with modern history. There are large tracts where the thrill of discovery is still possible—something that would be ludicrous in, say, the Lake District or as you queue to climb Mont Blanc. Nevertheless, as maps and other information about our popular wild areas become more bountiful it will become harder to sustain the illusion that such areas are indeed 'wild' and that we are looking at them as if we were the first to do so. Technology will see to that.

You don't need a crystal ball to realize that maps as we know them will soon go the same way as vinyl records. Map cases will be replaced by wafer-thin screens integrated with the Global Positioning System. Your 'map' will be a disc which, when inserted in the case, will display a topographical image. No longer will you have to juggle your compass and a sheet of paper that flaps madly in the wind. Instead, at the press of a button, everything will be there in a glowing mass of pixels: your location and course, weather forecasts, how many tent spaces are left at campsites, the creeks that are flowing—you name it.

I guess if they design a model that will fit down my shorts I will probably buy one. But part of me resists the rush to information overload. I would like to think that I will cling to the mystique of my paper charts. Those venerable documents which not only show you where you are and what's ahead but give your eye scope to roam and your mind the freedom to imagine places you never even dreamed of—not yet, anyway. ■

Quentin Chester

Quentin Chester (see Contributors in *Wild* no 3) is a freelance writer who specializes in outdoor topics. He is originally from Adelaide and lived for some years in exile on the Hawkesbury River, New South Wales, dreaming of the Flinders Ranges. He recently returned to Adelaide. He is the author of *The Kimberley—Horizons of Stone*, reviewed in *Wild* no 48.

THE LONG

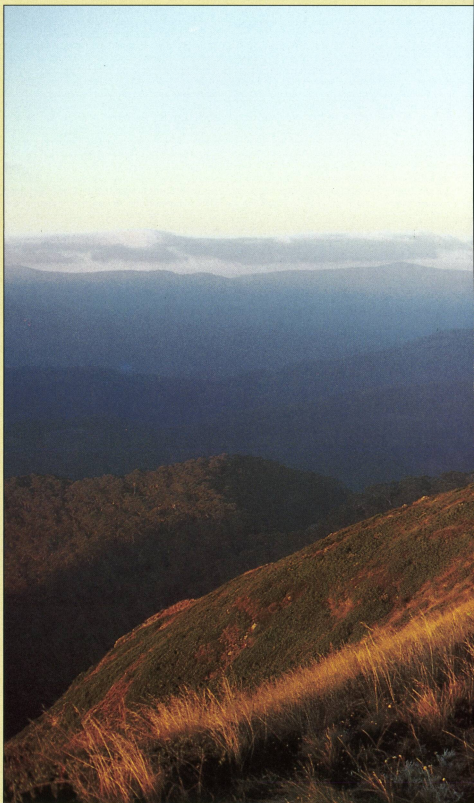
Australia's
long-distance
walking tracks,
by *John Chapman*

For many years Australia had only a couple of recognized long-distance walking tracks. Considering the rate at which we were destroying our native bushlands it seemed there would eventually be little scope for this activity. Fortunately the green revolution of the last two decades has benefited bushwalkers, with long-distance tracks appearing in most States. These tracks are now seen by land management authorities as both a status symbol and a focal point to attract interest from members of the general public who may be encouraged to walk short sections.

The newer long-distance tracks have often been initiated by a keen bushwalker or bushwalking group and then constructed by various groups ranging from local councils to National Park bodies. Unfortunately, some tracks seem to vanish soon after they have been created. Some sections of the Surf Coast Walk near Torquay in Victoria, for example, have all but disappeared. It is not sufficient to mark a track; it also needs maintenance. For a track to survive in the long term it usually needs to be managed by a government body prepared to maintain it. The lesson is obvious for track planners; get the State land managers involved both in design and in providing future commitments.

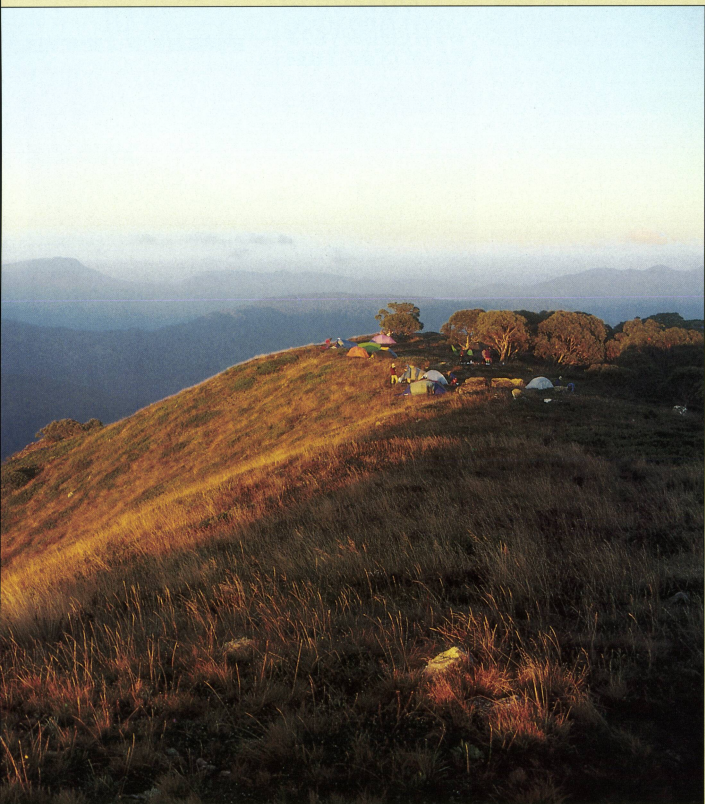
At present, some new tracks are being planned. Examples include the Great Dividing Trail which links the towns of Castlemaine, Ballarat and Bacchus Marsh in Victoria; and the Myall Heritage Trail north of Sydney. Neither these planned tracks nor those of which the future is threatened by poor maintenance have been included in the list below.

The tracks selected for this article are all recognized bushwalking tracks which provide at least four days' walking. All the tracks have names; most of these are officially recognized and marked on



Dawn breaks over Mt Speculation, which lies on one of the most spectacular legs of the Victorian section of the Alpine Walking Track. *Glenn van der Knijff*

WALKS



signposts and on a number of maps. Many have logos which provide easy-to-spot track markers. Most long-distance tracks are one-way routes for which transport needs to be organized at one or both ends of the track. In most cases guidebooks supply information about commercial transport; tourist bureaux are also excellent for finding charter buses and taxi services.

Minimum-impact bushwalking practices should always be followed when walking these tracks. Briefly: use fuel stoves; wash well away from streams; bury toilet waste deeply; and carry out all your rubbish. As well, some tracks cross private land or restricted regions such as catchments. Usually signs indicate such areas—please obey all restrictions as this will ensure access for future walkers. Deviations from the marked track will also be inevitable for a variety of reasons on such long routes and you should obey such changes. One current deviation on the Great North Walk is due to a nearby rifle-range.

As this article shows, Australia is now well served with long-distance walking tracks through most regions except Queensland. The one Queensland walk described here—on Hinchinbrook Island—is not really a long-distance track but has been included as it covers a region not otherwise represented. The only other significant walk in Queensland, the Cooloola Wilderness Trail, is only a two- to three-day walk. It is to be hoped that some keen Queensland walkers will instigate longer tracks through the magnificent rain forests; from Cairns to Cape York, for instance, or maybe one that follows the Scenic Rim near Brisbane. At the other extreme, both Tasmania and Victoria have many long-distance tracks and I have simply selected the longest.

LARAPINTA TRAIL

NORTHERN TERRITORY

This is a very spectacular walk along a desert range and when completed should become a must for every bushwalker—it is worth visiting the Northern Territory just for this walk. Still under construction, the track starts at Alice Springs and will follow the West Macdonnell Range for 220 kilometres. At present, 78 kilometres of track—comprising four sections out of the 13 planned—have been completed. Route selection and on-ground marking have also been done for several other sections. It is expected that another three-four years will be needed before the entire track is completed.

Brochures with contoured sketch-maps are being produced by the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory as each section is completed. No other guide-notes are yet available. Permits are not needed for this walk. Experienced bushwalkers with good navigation skills and suitable experience can follow the entire length of the currently proposed route.

EDITH FALLS WILDERNESS

NORTHERN TERRITORY

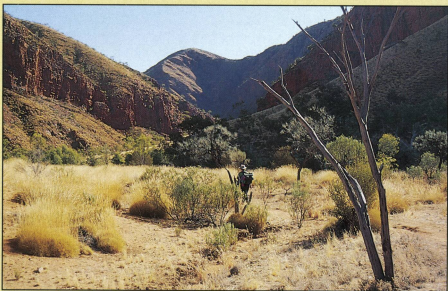
Katherine Gorge in the Northern Territory is one of the better-known tourist places of Australia. What is not well known, even among bushwalkers, is

fires are not allowed. While no guide-notes are available, the brochure 'Katherine Gorge Walking Tracks' from the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory shows the route and lists points where water can be obtained. The Natmap 1:100 000 Katherine map is useful although none of the walking tracks are marked.

EAST COAST TRAIL

QUEENSLAND

There are well-developed tourist resorts on most of Queensland's large islands. Luckily for bushwalkers, one of the largest, Hinchinbrook, has only a small development on its northern tip, leaving



Scenery typical of the Larapinta Trail; the rich desert colours of the West Macdonnell Range some 80 kilometres west of Alice Springs, Northern Territory. Bruce Godden

that the Nitmiluk National Park contains 150 kilometres of excellent walking tracks. Unfortunately, the tracks to the upper half of Katherine Gorge are closed at present but bushwalkers are encouraged to use the long-distance walk from the gorge to Edith Falls. Track markers indicate the way, which varies from management-vehicle tracks to rough pads through open bush. As there are only limited water-supplies, advice should be sought from the rangers before starting.

The track crosses a wide variety of terrain ranging from long, swampy valleys to the dry plateaux, passing through both desert areas and rain forest. Camping permits are needed and these are available only from the park headquarters at the foot of Katherine Gorge. Fuel stoves are necessary as camp

fires are not allowed. While no guide-notes are available, the brochure 'Katherine Gorge Walking Tracks' from the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory shows the route and lists points where water can be obtained. The Natmap 1:100 000 Katherine map is useful although none of the walking tracks are marked.

Permits are needed to walk here and are best arranged in advance. To keep this National Park in pristine condition quotas are set on both the total number of walkers allowed on the track at any one time (40) and on the number at each campsite. All access to the island is by boat, and when permits are obtained from the National Parks office at Cardwell, advice on boat operators should also be sought. An excellent brochure with maps and good notes is available from the National Parks Service.



GREAT NORTH WALK

NEW SOUTH WALES

This track is the result of a very ambitious undertaking by two Sydney bushwalkers, Garry McDougall and Leigh Shearer-Heriot. After having explored and planned a walk from Sydney to Newcastle, they canvassed support for a walking track. Realizing that for the track to be successful it had to be supported by a government department, they put in some amazing efforts, obtained grants from the Bicentennial Committee and had the track adopted by the Department of Conservation & Land Management.

The walk begins in the centre of Sydney and after a short ferry ride follows natural bushland almost the entire way to the city of Newcastle. While not strictly a wilderness walk, it has much to offer. It has been sited to pass through almost every type of environment found close to Sydney. Some of the route was burnt in the recent Sydney bushfires but should regenerate fairly quickly. The fires will of course have destroyed some of the track and track markers but, as it has government support, these should eventually be replaced.

A section of the track is currently closed because of a nearby rifle-range and a long detour is required; it is hoped that common sense will prevail and the track will resume its previous route. The best information about this track comes from the excellent guide *The Great North Walk* written by the walk's two originators. Maps to the entire route are produced in brochure form by the Department of Conservation & Land Management.

HUME AND HOVELL TRACK

NEW SOUTH WALES

This is the other long-distance walking track in New South Wales opened in the bicentenary year. This track was instigated by the then Department of Lands and was in the planning stage for several years. The most difficult task was to locate the actual route followed by Hume and Hovell on their overland journey to Melbourne. Where possible, the track closely follows the explorers' route. It has been sited to pass through both natural landscapes and



some agricultural regions to provide contrast and is modelled on similar tracks overseas.

The track itself is generally easy to follow, being signposted and marked throughout. It mainly passes through forestry areas as it skirts round the northern end of Kosciusko National Park. At present the track starts at Gunning and stretches for 372 kilometres towards Albury. It is planned eventually to extend the track to a length of 450 kilometres.

The Hume and Hovell Walking Track by Harry Hill is an excellent guidebook to the track. In addition, useful brochures with strip maps to most of the track are produced by the Department of Conservation & Land Management.

ALPINE WALKING TRACK

VIC / NSW / ACT

This well-known track follows the spine of the Victorian Alps from Walhalla in Victoria north-east to the New South Wales border. It was intended for the track to continue to Canberra but official agreement was never reached over the track's route. Finally, John Siseman, frustrated at the stand-off, explored and extended his description of the route all the way to Canberra and this has now become the unofficial route for walkers.

The track crosses mainly alpine pine country. It is at times very scenic and has proven to be a popular long-distance walk. While many groups and clubs set out each summer to walk the entire 765 kilometres, the majority select the more spectacular sections and follow the track for about one week. Most of the track is easy to follow although there are some short sections of untracked bush or overgrown pads along the route. An excellent guidebook to the track, *Alpine Walking Track* by John Siseman, is available. Good maps for the entire route can be obtained from various publishers.



ed for walkers as the Ben Cruachan Walking Track. It crosses the southern part of the Victorian Alps traversing many deep valleys and passing through a wide range of country. While the track can be followed for the entire distance, it is not very clearly marked nor is it shown on most maps. At present some sections follow major roads and it is intended to re-route these to locations more suitable for bushwalkers. This is a pleasant, interesting and historic track and provides tougher walking than the Alpine Walking Track. Its major attraction is that some sections are popular with horse-riders. Brief track notes are available in *Womangatta Moroka National Park* by John Siseman.

GREAT SOUTH WEST WALK

VICTORIA

This track, which started as a school project, has developed into an extensive circular loop of 250 kilometres in south-western Victoria. The track provides very easy walking for most of its length as there are very few hills. Initially crossing some farmland, it mainly passes through forestry areas and several sections of National Park. Its major features are the gorge of the Glenelg River, and the extremely long, sandy beach of Discovery Bay which takes three days to walk! The track follows closed roads, sandy beaches and walking tracks for most of its length.

The track is managed by the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources at Portland. While no permits are needed, it is a good idea to contact the department before starting, to inquire about current conditions as many campsites rely on tank-water. A small booklet containing brief notes and good sketch



McMILLANS WALKING TRACK

VICTORIA

In the 1860s McMillan constructed a track that was suitable for pack-horses from the Jordan Diggings near Woods Point (east of Melbourne) to Omeo. Later this became overgrown and in the 1980s the track was relocated and reopened



maps is produced by the Friends of the Great South West Walk. Detailed track notes are available in *Bushwalking in Australia* by John and Monica Chapman.

OVERLAND TRACK

T A S M A N I A

The best-known and most popular long-distance track in Australia needs no introduction to *Wild* readers. Crossing the central highlands of Tasmania, the track passes through the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. A wide variety of alpine scenery is passed along the way. The track was first opened in 1935 and has been upgraded steadily since then to become the easily walked path it is today. Passing through a high rainfall region, the track has been so badly eroded in the past that extreme repair

measures such as boardwalks and gravel have been necessary. A series of open huts exist along the track but tents are still needed as there is no booking system on hut space (first come, first served).

The entire track is now a fuel-stove-only area with all camp fires banned. Fees are charged for entry to all Tasmanian parks—including this walk—and are based on a daily rate. A good map to the park is produced by Tasmap. Detailed track notes can be found in *Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair and Walls of Jerusalem National Parks* by John Chapman and John Siseman.

SOUTH COAST TRACK

T A S M A N I A

This is the longest and best known of Tasmania's other walking tracks. It follows

the magnificent southern coastline of the South West National Park. The walking ranges from sparkling sandy beaches to notoriously muddy swampland. At one time the track was so muddy that it was commonly called 'the south coast sewer' (see the cover of *Wild* no 23) but extensive track repair work by National Park workers has improved the walking conditions dramatically. This is a true wilderness-style walk passing through natural landscape which is both spectacular and beautiful.

Permits are needed to enter the National Park and fees are based on a daily rate. No quotas are placed on the track. At present, only one section of the track is classed as fuel-stove-only but all walkers are requested to limit their use of fires elsewhere and use stoves. The track ends at the airstrip of Melaleuca although it is possible to extend it by following the Port Davey Track for a further 65 kilometres to Scotts Peak Dam. Detailed notes for both tracks are in *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman.

Long-distance walking tracks: who needs 'em? Quentin Chester

A few years ago I was ambling along a creek in the Flinders Ranges. Daybreak was clear and sharp. I walked alone while my colleagues were still rapt in sleep. The stroll took me through groves of sweetly fragrant callitris pines and late-winter grass spangled with dew. The drift of my walking thoughts just kept pace with the slow-moving shadows of early morning. Everything was going fine until I was confronted by some hard-edged geometry nailed to a tree ahead.

The red metallic triangle marked a track leading north. I followed the arrows and my nose, which detected pungent whiffs of pine smoke. Eventually the path brought me to a small clearing crowded with tents—perhaps a dozen in all—and a bonfire that was sending flames snapping as high as the encircling trees. The people by the fire were singing along with the noise from a ghetto-blasters. They were mostly obscured by smoke and tents. But I did notice that several trees near the camp were freshly stripped of lower limbs. There were also juice cartons, foil wrappers and ill-disposed mounds flagged with toilet-paper dotted round the site. My mood curdled. Where had this infernal crowd come from? I had no urge to linger and quickly withdrew to my quiet creek.

Later I discovered that I had unwittingly intersected the newly blazed Heysen Trail which, at the time, was being installed in stages along the length of the Flinders Ranges and south through the Adelaide Hills to the coast. This experience jaundiced my view of such inventions. Of course the group in question may not have been representative of the worthy types who might at other times travel such tracks. Nor perhaps is it fair to blame a few red signs for such egregious behaviour. But had there not been a marked track, I suspect that these people wouldn't have been there.

Many problems are associated with established walking tracks—and most of them are people. Any blazed path has the unhappy consequence of funneling crowds into places little visited previously. The longer the track, the more of the landscape is violated. As well as increasing traffic

a publicized route *does* encourage the 'wrong' sorts of people, travelling for the wrong sorts of reasons. In short, people who tend to stuff up the bush. It's also likely that some of these people will not have the wit or experience to cope with bad weather, natural hazards and medical emergencies in isolated parts.

Even if you're not fazed by the herds you might be a bit affronted by the sight of previously unsullied stretches of bush adorned with luminous track markers, self-important wooden signs and footpaths engineered for the trampling masses. Suddenly there are switchbacks etched into steep slopes, bridges erected over creeks, boardwalks spanning delicate surfaces, and natty steps and stairways built anywhere the ground underfoot gets a bit dicey. Thus the terrain is transformed, not just to make it convenient for passing patrons, but most of all to make it safe.

Once government agencies proclaim the existence of an authorized thoroughfare, they have to protect themselves from accusations of negligence and the spectre of liability litigation. The wild region that was once entered 'at your own risk' becomes a public facility to be improved and maintained. No matter how sensitively designed or discreetly signposted, these tracks are an imposition on the landscape.

This is not to say that every marked path is an evil enterprise. Most of our parks have short nature strolls and loop tracks catering for those who want to sample some of the local delights but haven't the time or skill to make their own way through the bush. These tracks normally don't intrude on the park at large and at least they serve to encourage visitors to get out of their vehicles and walk.

The real problem lies with prepared tracks on an epic scale. These constructions reduce the experience of *passing through* vast tracts of territory to that of *zooing along* a meadow corridor. They promote a notion that wild places can be subdued, processed, packaged and marketed for ready consumption rather than explored on their own terms. They represent join-the-dots bush-walking.

Our prevailing culture has always lauded schemes that surmount the nation's daunting distances. Whether it be stock-routes, overland telegraphs, pipelines or four-lane freeways, we marvel at achievements that tame tyrannical stretches of countryside. These may indeed be impressive feats but it is too much to ask that the few remaining areas not criss-crossed with artifacts of civilization be left untouched?

The experience of being in the bush is something that should test our own initiative and powers of interpretation. For those starting out it is reasonable that there should be options for walking that relieve the burdens of navigation and route finding. But to extend this idea to tracks covering hundreds of kilometres seems a dubious exercise. If people want to immerse themselves in the back-country for weeks at a time, they should have developed the skills to make their own way.

Primarily among these skills is the ability to judge the lie of the land. The security thrust of a marked track inhibits an understanding of place. The eye is forever scanning the scene for a bright shape or reflective ribbon to show the way. The mind tends to fix on the process of clocking up kilometres and reaching nominated destinations. Busy routes foster a kind of urgent rivalry as you press on to reach photo-opportunities, and designated campsites before the hordes descend. One is prey to the same kind of plodding, linear thinking that blinkers our lives as goal-driven workers and commuters.

Being in the wilds should be different from that. Certainly it's good to get to where you want to go. But it's no less important to see what's there, to have one's appreciation of a place shaped by a close-grained association with what's off the track, in those nooks where lateral discoveries are made. Rather than reflective disks impaled on trees, our passage through the country should follow an educated intuition about the natural world. We would be better guided by the contours of the terrain and by natural landmarks. Our signs should be the rocks and trees themselves. Then we would have lines through the country worth signing about. ■

PENGUIN CRADLE TRAIL

TASMANIA

This is an ambitious undertaking by the North West Walking Club and highlights the problems of tracks that are not adopted by government departments. Marking and clearing of the track depend on volunteers and as a result parts of this track are often overgrown and difficult to

Flinders Ranges. The scenery varies from coastal bushland to arid desert ranges. The track has been sited to pass through National Parks and forestry lands where possible. Even so, very large sections of the route cross farms and private property so don't expect a wilderness walk. Most people come to walk the spectacular sections, which are the ranges near Adelaide and the Flinders Ranges. Permits are not needed to follow the track. Track notes for the two popular



the southern coast of Western Australia. It follows quiet forestry roads and walking tracks and mainly passes through the tall forests of the region. It is not a wilderness walk although where possible the track is sited in undisturbed forests. While it is possible to walk the track at any time of the year, walkers need to know that there is a total fire-ban—which includes fuel stoves—in the summer. Most streams are dry for much of the year so don't come here in the hotter months.

No permits are needed. The track is marked throughout by unique signs. Good information and excellent strip maps are found in *A Guide to the Bibbulmun Track* by the Department of Conservation & Land Management.



BICENTENNIAL NATIONAL TRAIL

VIC / NSW / QLD

This 5000 kilometre track has been included only for completeness as it is really a long-distance horse-riding route. It was instigated by the Australian Trail



Duck-boards and cushion plants—typical fare on Tasmania's Overland Track near Mt Ossa. Glenn van der Knijff. **Right**, rugged going near Lion Rock, South Coast Track, Tasmania. John Chapman

follow. It crosses the forested hills from Penguin on Tasmania's northern coast to the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park and thus provides an interesting, different access point for the Overland Track.

Passing through forestry areas, some farm country, the spectacular Leven Canyon and across alpine moorlands, this track offers an experience different from that of Tasmania's other tracks. The track itself is signposted throughout. No permits are needed as the track does not enter any National Parks. Good current track-note information is available in the form of notes from the North West Walking Club. The entire route is mapped by Tasmap at 1:25 000 although the track's location is only shown on new editions.

HEYSEN TRAIL

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

As South Australia's only long track, the Heyesen Trail has become very well known although few have ever walked its entire length. It starts at Cape Jervis south of Adelaide and passes through the Mt Lofty Ranges and the Barossa Valley, eventually ending in the far northern



sections are available, *Parachilna to Hawker* and *Encounter Bay to the Barossa Valley*. There are also strip maps; all are produced by the South Australian Government.

BIBBULMUN TRACK

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Starting from just outside Perth, this track extends south-east to Walpole on

Horse Riders Association and the route has been selected to avoid wilderness areas. Good campsites and watering points are often 40 kilometres apart, a reasonably easy distance for horses but too far for two-legged transport.

The track extends from just outside Melbourne to Cooktown in Queensland following the slopes of the Great Dividing Range most of the way. Much of the track follows vehicle tracks and quiet country roads. A good set of twelve guidebooks covers the entire track. ■

John Chapman (see Contributors in *Wild* no 1) is one of Australia's most travelled and widely respected bushwalking writers. He is particularly well known for his books of Tasmanian track notes.

WILD TREKKING





HIGHEST AFRICA

Trekking in the mountains of East Africa,
by *Grant Dixon*

My introduction to the mountains of East Africa took place more than 8000 metres above the ground while on an international flight to Nairobi. Dawn had just broken and the plains below were covered by haze or cloud, typical of the June dry season. Floating ethereally to the south was the snow-capped dome of Mt Kilimanjaro—the only land visible in any direction. Several weeks later I glimpsed the mountain from below, this time through the haze from Amboseli, while watching the elephants and other wildlife that live in sight of this massive mountain. Trekking had not been a major part of my agenda for that particular trip. However, those views of Mt Kilimanjaro and a subsequent trek on the slopes of Mt Kenya had confirmed my intention to return and spend time in the mountains.

The preparations for our forays into the East African mountains were greatly assisted by one member of the party having friends resident in Nairobi—their house and garden proved a very useful base from which to mount shopping expeditions. My knowledge of overland transport from experiences the previous year also proved to be useful.

The first phase of our plans—several weeks in the Rwenzori Mountains of Uganda—involved travelling across Kenya and Uganda. We caught the overnight train from Nairobi to Kisumu, on Lake Victoria, an experience reminiscent of colonial days. In Kisumu we negotiated a deal with a *matatu* (minibus) driver for transport to the border before he realized how much gear and how many people he had agreed to carry. It was a slow trip to the border: a pleasant change from some *matatu* rides I had previously experienced. The border formalities went well until Ron affirmed that he had a first aid kit buried in his pack. Unpacking and inspection of the various pills ensued. In contrast to our Kenyan driver, the one behind the wheel of the *matatu* which transported us to Kampala seemed to be practising for the inaugural Ugandan Grand Prix!

Kampala is built on a series of hills north of Lake Victoria. It is a small, green city, easy to get around in and full of friendly people, but it still bears the scars of the civil war, such as missing windows and bullet-holes in many buildings. The *New Vision*, the national newspaper, is for sale on almost every street corner.

After setting up camp in Kampala in the grounds of the YMCA, we ambled down to the bank to change some money. Having visited Uganda the previous year I knew to take a day pack. Uganda at that time had no large-denomination bills and at the prevailing exchange rate sufficient funds for a three-week trip to the Rwenzori would have required a very large wallet. A visit to the station confirmed that a departure to Kasese, the nearest town to the Rwenzori, was



Alexandra, the second-highest peak on Mt Stanley, Rwenzori Mountains, Uganda. **Pages 42 and 43**, the extraordinary equatorial ice-cliffs of Mt Kilimanjaro. All photos Grant Dixon

remains in a state of disrepair; the train, however, attempts to make the journey several times a week. Sleeping-mats are a useful accessory even in first class, covering the exposed springs and gaps in what's left of the seats.

The train crawled out of Kampala station the next day—on time—and soon left the city behind. We made slow progress across the hot Ugandan lowlands, with lengthy stops at every village—at which times the train was usually besieged by food vendors. Still more vendors staffed stalls adjacent to the train stops so it was easy to pass the time sampling a variety of local foodstuffs. Armed guards patrolled every carriage: there was still some concern due to rebel activity in the north of the country. The journey took 28 hours, twice as long as timetabled (as though that means anything) and was punctu-

We arrived in Kasese hot and tired late in the day. While we intended to do some climbing, we planned to walk in and out of the mountains with a larger trekking group. Several members of the group had arrived in Kasese earlier and had already contacted Rwenzori Mountaineering Services, the group that organizes most treks. Having nothing else to do, we dumped our gear at the hotel and went looking for a cold beer. Many East African hotels, including the one in which we were staying, are Muslim-owned and so do not sell alcohol. However, Coke and other soft drinks are widely available—I wonder at the annual per capita consumption of soft drinks!

The next morning two utes collected the expanded party and gear from the hotel and, after a few circuits of town looking for petrol, transported us to Nyakalengija village. Here the paperwork was completed, money was handed over, porters were chosen and loads were weighed and distributed. Finally,



For the first hour or so our route ran through pleasantly undulating fields beside the Mubuku River. Part-way up the 1000 metre climb to Nyabitaba Hut, however, I was wondering at the sense in carrying most of my own gear (something about doing it myself, getting really fit and saving a few dollars, I seem to recall).

The Rwenzori have a deserved reputation for wet weather (their name is derived from local words meaning 'Hill of Rain') and hence I wasn't surprised when it started to rain heavily. As the altitude was still fairly low and the temperature was quite mild, I chose to get comfortably soaked to the skin rather than wear a steamy parka.

It gets dark rapidly in the tropics, particularly when one is also in the clouds. When darkness descended several members of our expanded party were still some distance from camp. However, an excursion with torches and much cooing eventually had everyone together.

The following day involved a steady climb to about 3200 metres through

bamboo and moss forest—where every branch and twig is clothed in moss and epiphytes—with occasional glimpses of the steep, green walls of the Bujuku valley through gaps in the canopy. There is also plenty of the infamous Rwenzori mud although anyone experienced in Tasmanian bogs wouldn't be too surprised.

The new John Matte Hut, built for trekkers, was intended to localize their impact, and this it has largely done. Unfortunately, while most trekkers use stoves for cooking, trek porters do not and the area of mud and clear-felled vegetation around the hut is already expanding alarmingly.

Bujuku Lake, lying at almost 4000 metres in a steep-sided glacial valley surrounded by Mts Stanley, Speke and Baker, was our destination the following day and would be our base for forays into the surrounding mountains. Bigo Bog, with its occasional mud traps, contains several of the weird, giant Afro-alpine plant species—lobelia and cypripedium of giant groundsel. From Bigo Bog we climbed up beside a waterfall, through

an extensive grove of tree-groundsel and past Bujuku Lake, with knee-deep mud below and rain and hail showers above. Camp was established beside a somewhat dilapidated shelter hut above and beyond the lake. Most of the remaining porters now returned to the village. Our communal guide Zebadiah, who has been guiding parties into the Rwenzori since the early 1960s, and mission-educated John, who spoke the best English, remained with us.

Several ascents were undertaken during the next few days, interspersed with eating, reading and resting in camp when the weather looked more dubious. However, as we discovered several days later when camped on Mt Stanley, it can be clear and pleasant on the summits while wet and cloudy in the valley 1000 metres below.

Mt Speke is the easiest of the high Rwenzori peaks to ascend, the normal route being non-technical (although a glacier must be crossed). Vittorio Emanuele (4890 metres) is its highest point. The route leads up through giant groundsel forest to a saddle, then up steep, wet and slippery rock slabs to a series of shelves. Here we elected to sidle around to the snout of the Speke Glacier; a more interesting route, we thought. Reaching the ice, after some exciting moments on glaciated rock slabs, crampons were donned. Some rudimentary instruction in self-arrest techniques was imparted to those who hadn't done this before, and we plodded up into the mist. The glacier steepened, then eased. A prospective gully was chosen and soon there was no more up; we were standing on the corniced and rime-encrusted summit. There was no view. We descended the same route, with entertainment provided by Doug who elected to practise his self-arrest instruction—fortunately successfully—during a 200 metre slide towards a crevasse.

The climb to Irene Lakes is one of the most scenic routes in the area, ascending steeply through groundsel forest and above cliffs to a tarn-studded shelf below the Margherita Glacier on Mt Stanley. We intended to go further and attempt a more technical route to Margherita by its East Ridge while the non-climbers explored nearby valleys. Margherita (5109 metres) is the highest peak of Mt Stanley and the third-highest summit in Africa. The attempt proved successful, and the mist which accompanied us for most of the climb cleared while we were on the summit to reveal nearby rime-covered Alexandra (5091 metres). During the descent Andrew almost succeeded in examining the lower reaches of the East Ridge's northern aspect under the direct influence of gravity. Fortunately, his aerial acrobatics deposited him on a solid snow-ledge. He was uncharacteristically subdued for some time thereafter.

East African Mountains; facts for trekkers

Africa is not commonly considered a mountainous continent although many parts of this huge continent are extremely rugged. The highest mountain areas, which are also amongst the most interesting and accessible, are located in East Africa—Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. East Africa is equatorial, but the altitude of the mountain areas and of the high plateau covering much of Kenya and Tanzania means that the climate is mercifully not too hot.

The Rwenzori Mountains are a 110 kilometre long range straddling the Uganda-Zaire border, with access from Uganda being the easiest and least tedious. Three points on the highest peak, Mt Stanley, top 5000 metres; Margherita (5109 metres) is the third-highest summit in Africa. The range is very rugged, thickly vegetated below 3500 metres and carries glaciers on the five highest peaks. It has a well-deserved reputation for wet weather. This is the most challenging trekking destination of the three areas described in the main article. There are potential trekking routes up most valleys; with pass crossings at their heads. The Bujuku valley area, the most popular, contains several rather rudimentary huts.

Mt Kenya (5199 metres) is the highest peak in Kenya and the second highest in Africa. Its summit is a spectacular spire at the centre of a mountain almost 100 kilometres in diameter, situated about 160 kilometres north of Nairobi. A number of small, rapidly receding glaciers surround the summit spires. There are three well-defined trekking routes on the open ridges and valleys which radiate from the peak itself.

Mt Kilimanjaro is a massive rather than spectacular mountain. It is often half seen floating in the haze from the surrounding lowlands, above which it rises more than 4500 metres, and is one of the world's highest free-standing mountains. A well-patternized trekking route with hut accommodation leads up the south-eastern slopes. This is traversed by thousands of people every year, but only a small proportion succeed in reaching the summit. The rapid rise to high altitude and lack of fitness of many aspiring ascensionists take a heavy toll. Less popular routes approach the summit from other directions and it is possible to make a multiday circuit of the mountain at more than 4000 metres.

Geology

The East African mountains are all very young geologically. The rocks of the Rwenzori Mountains are ancient, more than 600 million years old, but have been uplifted by earth movements associated with the Great Rift Valley during the last ten million years. Mts Kenya and Kilimanjaro were also formed by activity associated with the Great Rift Valley. However, unlike the Rwenzori Mountains, both these mountains are volcanoes. Mt Kenya was formed by successive eruptions about three million years ago, with subsequent erosion exposing the volcanic 'plug'. Mt Kilimanjaro is the youngest of the mountains; its oldest lavas formed only one million years ago and active steam vents and recent sulphur deposits can be seen near its summit.

All the mountains have been glaciated to below 3500 metres during recent ice-ages. The Rwenzori display evidence of several periods of glaciation, the major deep valleys being largely of glacial origin. Glaciers remain on all three mountains but are now retreating rapidly.

Flora and fauna

The mountain areas are isolated, high-altitude islands. The vegetation covering them displays distinct altitudinal zonation. The highest altitude zones contain many species endemic to the one mountain although usually closely related to species on the other peaks.



Despite its equatorial location and volcanic origin, Mt Kilimanjaro's summit is still graced with dazzling glaciers.

Below the rock, ice and alpine desert of the summit areas is the zone of moorland, giant heather, groundsel and lobelia (the weird vegetation for which the East African mountains are most famous). Woodland, with twisted trees and many shrubs and herbs, is found at a lower altitude; followed, progressively, by a belt of bamboo (mostly lacking on Mt Kilimanjaro) and montane forest, rich in species and with many epiphytes and vines.

Larger animals are rare, although both elephant and buffalo exist on the lower slopes. Many monkeys and birds are heard, but not often seen, in the forests. Hyrax live in colonies above the tree-line. They are partial to trekkers' food supplies in the more frequently visited areas.

History

The Rwenzori are claimed to be the fabled 'Mountains of the Moon' referred to as the source of the Nile by Ptolemy in 150 AD although his story is based on much earlier accounts. Stanley and his companions were the first Europeans to sight the Rwenzori in 1876. In 1906 the Italian Duke of Abruzzi mounted a large scientific and mountaineering expedition and made ascents of most of the highest peaks. Shipton and Tilman visited the Rwenzori in 1932, undertaking a number of fast first ascents in their usual style. The first huts were built in the 1940s. The Ugandan Rwenzori Forest National Park, which includes the mountains, was established in 1991.

Mts Kenya and Kilimanjaro are both the focus of many of the local people's legends. They were first sighted by German missionaries in the 1840s, but it was not until 1883 that it was accepted by European scholars that the snows of these peaks—so close to the equator—really existed.

Mt Kenya was first climbed by Mackinder (a feature on the normal route still bears his name) and two European mountain guides in 1899, on their third attempt. Shipton undertook the second ascent in 1929 and, with Tilman, the first traverse in 1930. In 1943 Benuzzi, an Italian mountaineer, escaped

from a POW camp at the foot of Mt Kenya and attempted the peak—he almost succeeded. His book on the attempt (see 'Further reading') is a classic.

Attempts to reach the summit of Mt Kilimanjaro culminated in the success of Meyer and Purtscheller in 1889. Norwegian aid money and assistance built huts and transformed the route up Mt Kilimanjaro's south-east flank during the early 1980s. Mt Kilimanjaro is now the biggest money-earner of all Tanzanian National Parks.

Politics

Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda gained their independence from the UK in the 1960s. They all have single-party, elected democratic governments, with a president as head of state. Pressure for a multiparty system has resulted in some violence in Kenya in recent years and both Kenya and the nominally more socialist Tanzania are apparently moving towards establishing multiparty systems. Uganda suffered terribly during the Idi Amin era and subsequent civil war, which ended in 1986. The country is hence very run down. There now seems to be a prevailing sense of 'enough is enough' amongst the Ugandans and a communal effort is under way to get their country together again. Consequently the Ugandans, in particular, are very friendly and welcoming to tourists.

When to go

The dry seasons are December-February and June-September although this is only relative in the Rwenzori. Even at these times of the year there is afternoon cloud and rain, and snow often falls on Mts Kenya and Kilimanjaro; in the Rwenzori it can—and does—rain and snow at any time.

These periods are also the most popular for tourists generally, with the peak season being July-August, which coincides with European summer holidays and the great wildlife migrations from the Serengeti. Early in the dry seasons is probably more pleasant, and there are likely to be fewer fellow trekkers.

If mountaineering is planned, the southern flank of Mt Kilimanjaro are in better condition during June-July. Mt Kenya, which lies on the equator, has two seasons at the same time—its North Face experiences summer in June and winter in January; its South Face, the opposite.

Transport and accommodation

The cheapest flights from Australia to Nairobi travel by way of South-east Asia, Pakistan or Mauritius and invariably involve one or two compulsory overnight stops *en route*. Flying by way of Zimbabwe is cheaper than it used to be and allows one to visit other parts of Africa.

Overland transport within East Africa is easy to organize and relatively frequent, if not always reliable. Trains cross Kenya and part of Uganda—the Kenyan train experience harks back to colonial days; the Ugandan train (Kampala-Kasese) is an experience of a different sort. If travelling by road, the large local buses are slow but allow the best experience and view of the local people and countryside. In Kenya, Peugeot 'taxis' are faster, particularly from Nairobi to the Tanzanian border. *Matatus* (minibuses) all seem to be driven by aspiring racing drivers; unfortunately, however, they lack any of the desirable skills. Road vehicles and roads in Tanzania are in a greater state of disrepair than is the case in Kenya; hence travel is slower.

All towns have reasonable, inexpensive accommodation—the tourist safari trade is well established in East Africa. The upper end of the accommodation market is satisfactorily catered for in Nairobi.

Safaris

A safari is an essential part of the East African experience (with cameras rather than guns these days).

It is impossible to walk the streets of Nairobi, or stay in any of the hotels, without being offered 'safaris'. Many safari companies also have street offices. The cheapest method is to arrange the safari yourself, particularly if you can get a group of six-eight together. The vehicles are usually Nissan-type minibuses with 'pop-tops' for viewing. By paying more for a safari you get a better painted and upholstered vehicle, but even the best vehicles break down. For a seven-day safari including food and tent accommodation, taking in Maasai Mara, Amboseli and Lake Nakuru, expect to pay from \$A400 upwards—it will be an experience you won't forget. These parks can be quite crowded during peak season—it can be difficult to discern whether it is the wildlife or the Nissan vans that are migrating at some locations!

In Tanzania safaris are more organized and expensive as there are greater distances involved. Park and camping fees are higher, too. The vehicles are usually dilapidated four-wheel-drives, which can make things pretty exciting. Nevertheless, the famous Ngorongoro Crater is an amazing spectacle (expect to pay at least \$A300 for three days).

In Uganda it is challenging just to reach most safari locations, due to a lack of transport and the condition of the roads. Tragically, the wildlife populations were decimated during the civil war. If you do make it there, however, there won't be many other tourists.

Trekking arrangements

All arrangements for the Rwenzori can and should be made with Rwenzori Mountaineering Services in Kasese, the nearest town to the mountains. They can organize guides, porters and park entry fees; they will also arrange transport and food buying if required. Basic foods can be bought in Kasese but shopping in Nairobi provides more variety. A six-seven day Bujuku-Mubuku trek will cost \$A150-200.

Guides and porters for Mt Kenya can either be hired easily at Naro Moru on the main road west of the mountain or, less readily, in Chogoria to the east, although they are neither compulsory nor

necessary. From the main road you can either walk (one day) or hire a vehicle (not cheap)—a painful choice—to the park entrance, where fees are payable (\$A25 a night).

Mt Kilimanjaro is the most organized, restricted and expensive of the three areas. Compulsory guides and porters can be arranged readily through tour operators in Arusha or Moshi or on the streets of Moshi, as can transport up the lower slopes. Park and camping fees are not cheap, and even less so if you wish to stay anywhere on the mountain other than in the huts on the Marangu Route. Fees are payable at Marangu Gate—regardless of whether you are intending to trek another route—before your intended departure date, which must be fixed beforehand. Expect to pay \$A600 or more in fees and other costs (tips are extra) for five (often rather uncomfortable) days on the mountain.

Photography

A range of films is available only in Nairobi, but it is probably best to take a supply with you. Try to avoid multiple airport X-rays. For wildlife photography during safaris a longer focal length lens, ideally 300 millimetres, is desirable although shorter lenses are still useful. A tripod is an essential accessory, at least in the dense forests on the mountains' lower slopes. Dust and grit are a problem on the lowlands, especially on safaris during the dry seasons. Conversely, rain and moisture could cause problems in the Rwenzori. Don't leave film in direct sunlight although the climate is not excessively hot—I had no problems with heat damage. In the mountains it is often below freezing point at night, but not enough to create problems with film or equipment. Be considerate when taking 'people photographs'—in the most popular areas, not unreasonably, a payment is expected.

Afternoon cloud is typical in the mountains but is rarely particularly thick and so photographs taken at this time can display a bluish cast unless a warming filter is used. Equatorial latitudes result in a high contrast between sunlit and shadow areas during the day, which can necessitate more selective exposure than is normal. Also, the sun rises and sets more directly than in temperate areas, with the period of low, reddish light quite short.

Maps and guides

Detailed maps and guides are not easy to obtain before arriving in East Africa. The guides noted below are the most useful and were readily available in Nairobi bookshops. Stanfords in London may be worth a try if you wish to peruse them prior to your trip. Very general trekking information is contained in guides such as those published by Lonely Planet, but perusal of the other references below will give a better idea of the terrain.

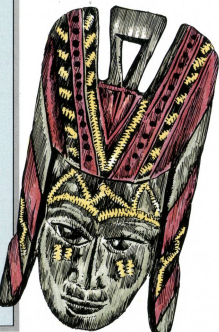
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A recently built hut is situated at 4500 metres on rock slabs on the south-eastern side of Mt Stanley, near the Elena Glacier. This is reached by way of a steep climb up the Groundsel Gully, or directly from Scott-Elliott Pass, above Bujuku Lake. Our heavy packs made the climb quite a grind, and the smooth, snow-slickened slabs to the hut were a particularly delicate and unexpected finale. The Elena Glacier, lying a few minutes across the sloping slabs from the hut, is the easiest access route to the Stanley Plateau and the peaks of Alexandra and Margherita beyond.

Our first morning at Elena dawned misty but, with indications of clear skies above, we set off for Alexandra. By the time the Stanley Plateau was reached, we were above the cloud. The peaks of Alexandra, Moebius and Elena shone in the sun around us and Mt Speke floated above the cloud across the Bujuku valley—a perfect African alpine day. The Stanley Plateau Glacier, at 4800 metres and about one square kilometre in area, lies atop Mt Stanley and straddles the Nile-Zaire continental watershed and the Uganda-Zaire border. Glaciers drain from it in three directions—it is truly the roof of Africa and is an incredibly beautiful area. The climb to Alexandra (5091 metres) was straightforward, up a steep snow-slope and along a rocky, rime-encrusted ridge to the summit. We spent a long time on the summit admiring the extensive view of the Stanley Plateau to nearby Margherita and west across the hazy foothills of Zaire.

The next day we decided to visit Zaire. Another traverse of the Stanley Plateau, again in clear, fine weather, preceded a steep descent of the West Stanley Glacier to the head of the Kamusoso valley, with the aptly named Lakes Blanc, Gris and Vert below. The Zaire side of the Rwenzori is much drier than the





Hall Tarns, on the slopes of Mt Kenya. **Right**, some of the weird Mt Kenyan vegetation: 'Cousin It' lobelia (foreground) and giant groundsel.

Ugandan slopes, and this valley is typically barren and rocky with the odd groundsel sheltering behind boulders. We spent a lazy afternoon in the sun, gazing at the steep glaciers and ramparts of Mt Stanley until disturbed by a strong, hot wind. We returned to Uganda the next day by way of the Stanley Plateau and Moebius in warm, still conditions yet again. The Rwenzori weren't supposed to be like this.

Given the perfect previous days, a snowfall overnight and a grey dawn were more than enough to dampen our enthusiasm for another outing. We packed up and descended to Scott-Elliott Pass, then skirted beneath the huge cliffs of Mt Baker on the way to Kitandara Lakes. These lakes lie in a particularly scenic valley on the western slopes of the Rwenzori, a fine place to spend a few days. The following afternoon, however, we moved to a camp high on Mt Baker. The next morning I rose early and scrambled to Edward (4843 metres), the mountain's highest peak, for a solitary view of the colourful sunrise on the peaks of Mt Stanley across the valley.

Our descent from Mt Baker followed an unconventional route but provided an unsurpassed opportunity to view the gardens of moss-carpeted rock which lie just below the zone of bare rock and

snow. We crossed the continental divide again at Freshfield Pass, the head of the Mubuku valley—surely from here it would be all downhill! Shelves dotted with groundsel separated descents of steep rock-steps. A huge overhanging bluff, Bujongolo, provides an extensive dry area and was used as a Base Camp by the Duke of Abruzzi's 1906 expedition, which climbed most of the Rwenzori's high peaks. It was a tempting place to stop but we pushed on, entering again the zone of mud and steep, root-laced descents.

The descent continued the following day, now down and beside waterfalls—excessively exciting in the wet I suspect—by way of more mud, a river-crossing and a ridge-traverse through thick bamboo. The rapid descent from Mt Baker graphically displayed the distinct altitudinal zonation of the Rwenzori vegetation, with a mercifully lighter pack facilitating its appreciation! We halted early at Nyabitaba Hut, not wanting it all to end too quickly, then descended back to the fields of Nyakalengija the next morning.

We bumped back along the road to Kasese in the back of a ute. The mountains were unusually clear for so late in the day and the glaciers of Mts Speke and Stanley glistened in the distance.

A high-speed blow-out in one of the double rear wheels of a bus, which subsequently showed no slackening of

speed, and another selection of break-neck *matatu* rides provided considerable excitement during the return to Kenya and Nairobi.

Of the East African mountain treks, Mt Kenya has the easiest access and is the most straightforward to organize. Its lower slopes are easily reached by bus from Nairobi and roads approach the tree-line, and become trekking routes, on three sides of the mountain. The road network exists largely to service forestry areas. Mt Kenya National Park lies mostly above the tree-line and the lower mountain forest is at the continual mercy of politically fickle forest policies. Significant areas of the lower slopes of Mt Kenya have been converted to pine plantations.

We spent a night at Naro Moru village, which is on the main road north from Nairobi and at the foot of Mt Kenya. The previous year we had eaten a voluminous post-trek dinner in the bar here, the ancient juke-box blaring in a corner and the room pulsating with happy, dancing, inebriated villagers.

We drove up to the park gate and the meteorological station beyond, the start of the Naro Moru Route which is the easiest and most direct trekking route to Mt Kenya. It is now traversed by an increasing number of organized and independent trekkers and, particularly in the wetter areas, is showing the impact. The Naro Moru Route soon emerges from the tree-line and enters the

'vertical bog'—in reality a series of poorly drained shelves. However, attempts to find the driest option have resulted in extensive track braiding. The route eventually leaves the tussock-covered ridge crest and sides through open, giant groundsel forest, with the occasional strange 'ostrich-plume' lobelia, reminiscent of the Addams Family's Cousin It! This lobelia comprises a spike up to a metre tall, which at first glance appears to be sheathed in feathers. In the upper Naro Moru valley the route passes a large stone hut for trekkers and a Rangers' Post. We climbed further, to a terrace situated above the track and below Mt Kenya's impressive South Face, where we set up camp sufficiently out of sight not to be disturbed.

The previous year we had plodded slowly up the eastern slopes of the mountain from Chogoria. The slow pace had aided our acclimatization and allowed time to explore the surrounding area, which included strange rock outcrops formed by differential erosion of lava and ash deposits and copses of giant tree-groundsel growing beneath rock bluffs, themselves alive with bounding, squeaking hyrax. The hyrax is a large, rodent-like creature actually related to the elephant although there is certainly no superficial resemblance! One hyrax, braver than its mates and obviously aware that the two-legged intruders carried food, crept closer until it was eating from our hands. On one occasion a hyrax tried out its teeth on one of my plastic climbing boots, so they obviously aren't too fussy about what they eat.

Near the highest point of our trek from Chogoria we had traversed a scree-slope, thick mist limiting visibility to 50 metres, the altitude noticeable if one pushed too hard. Cresting a rise, we had encountered a lighter and brighter area ahead across an icy pool—the Lewis Glacier. We had camped near the pool; the squalid Austrian Hut nearby not being particularly inviting. From here it had been a short scramble to Point Lenana (4985 metres), the highest point which can be reached by non-climbers. A frigid pre-dawn ascent had provided a spectacular view of Nelion, the eastern peak of Mt Kenya, lit a brilliant orange at dawn while all below was still in darkness.

The following year I watched the full moon set; Hut Tarn shimmered across the valley and the first light of a pink dawn flushed the crags above. I was again scrambling up beside the Lewis Glacier, this time intent on the peak of Mt Kenya itself. The normal route is a rockclimb up the South-east Ridge of Nelion. We moved at a leisurely pace, weighed down by too much gear and climbing as two pairs, enjoying the situations and the view, until the ubiquitous cloud rose to envelop us. Greg and I spent the night on

the summit, as planned, while Ron and Andrew slept on narrow ledges below. At sunset the afternoon clouds fell away and the temperature plummeted. We felt on top of the world, with an extensive (albeit hazy) view and no other mountains anywhere in sight.

A trekking route circumnavigates the peak, remaining above 4400 metres most of the way and visiting a number of the clear, green tarns perched in basins below the crags. After a night's rest at our camp, Greg and I set off up the Lewis Glacier again. Having crampons we could take a short cut across the saddle between Nelion and Point Lenana, then down the steeper Gregory Glacier. The more usual route passes below and to the east of Point Lenana.

Sliding down snow-tongues and bounding down scree-slopes took us into the head of the Mackinder valley and below the spectacular North Face of Mt Kenya. At this time of year (late January), the northern face of the mountain was experiencing winter as evidenced by the ice that filled cracks and gullies, while the southern faces were in summer—a peculiar result of the mountain's equatorial location.

We lunched in the sun at Kami Tarn, accompanied by a curious hyrax perched in a particularly scenic position on a shelf with a groundsel and lobelia rock-garden. The barren ramparts of the mountain towered above us. From the tarn the series of ascents and descents continues, with barren ridge-tops, more green tarns and rock-gardens alternating round the western slopes of the mountain as we proceeded back to camp.

Ron and I had decided to descend the mountain by the little-used Burguret Route, on the western slopes. Apart from the attraction of the little known, the western slopes offered an experience of the approach to the mountain used by Felice Benuzzi in 1943. Benuzzi, an Italian mountaineer, was interned in a POW camp below Mt Kenya in 1943. To counteract the boredom of camp routine he planned and, with another prisoner, carried out an amazing attempted ascent of the mountain. They made or stole their equipment in the camp, broke out and spent 15 days on the mountain. A successful attempt was foiled by bad weather and lack of food.

We climbed past Hut Tarn and crossed the barren ridge crest, littered with boulders festooned with beard-like lichen. We descended into the Burguret valley and tussock-hopped down to the distinctive Highland Castle, a series of towers and bluffs of volcanic rock atop the ridge crest, honeycombed with overhangs and grottoes. We spent the night under one of the overhangs, surrounded by buffalo droppings and footprints.

Buffalo trails proved quite useful in the thicker vegetation on the lower slopes. However, we followed them with some

trepidation in the bamboo zone; the thickness of the vegetation precluded rapid exits from the trail and the possibility of meeting an angry buffalo round a blind bend was real—some of the footprints did not look very old.

We emerged from the bamboo, with relief, and stumbled on to an old logging road. Despite past logging, there remained some huge, old trees in the tangled forest beside the road—had these trees perhaps been too big? We reached a small village after several hours of downhill travel, my heavy pack bouncing uncomfortably on my back. We managed to get a ride out to the main



road on a logging truck—what else? The workers, who like us clung to the load as we jolted further downhill, were keen to hear about our route as it is apparently very little traversed these days, and certainly not by unaccompanied *munungs*.

A high-speed Peugeot taxi ride to the Tanzanian border followed by a somewhat slower, lumbering Tanzanian bus ride brought us to Moshi by late afternoon, in time to watch the setting sun light Mt Kilimanjaro's glaciers. The mountain rises immediately north of the town and we hoped that in a few days we would be somewhere up on those glaciers.

The initial stage of organizing the trip—finding a guide—was solved the first time we stepped on to the street.

'Kennedy' asked whether we intended to attempt Mt Kilimanjaro, offered himself as a guide and proudly showed us his 'licence'. His price was good so we accepted. Ron and I knew exactly where we wanted to go, how to go about getting there, and what the price should be. If one lacks any of this information, such a method of obtaining a guide, while relatively cheap, is not necessarily recommended.

We drove up to Kilimanjaro National Park's Marangu Gate in a ute belonging to one of Kennedy's many relatives. We registered, made our booking for the trek to start the next day, and (after some second thoughts) handed over the expensive park and camping fees. Back in Moshi we toured the market with Kennedy although I doubt that we received any better deals in the bargaining because of his presence. Like many town markets of any size, most of the Moshi market is covered and is full of smells and colour. The stall holders, predominantly women, sell a wide range of utensils, tropical fruits and vegetables, and dried fish.

Next morning Kennedy turned out to be suspiciously unavailable. However, his 'cousin' Joachim and 'uncle' Eric announced that they were coming instead. Joachim was apparently the guide and Eric the porter, the distinction being that Eric carried their sack of gear more often. Most Tanzanian porters carry gear in sacks which they balance on their heads, and Eric and Joachim were no exception. This was an impressive achievement over the steep, uneven terrain of the Umbwe Route, which ascends the southern slopes of Mt Kilimanjaro directly and spectacularly.

We bounced up a rutted track on Mt Kilimanjaro's southern slopes in a dilapidated Land Rover, driven by yet another member of the family. The Land Rover left us in a grassy clearing where the track narrowed, steepened and entered the forest. Joachim and Eric announced that they were off for a few minutes to visit friends, and strolled away in the same direction the vehicle had just gone. Ron and I sat down for a quick lunch in the sun, after which we intended to undertake the leisurely climb to a rock overhang at 2800 metres, where we planned to spend the night—or so we thought. After three hours Joachim and Eric still hadn't returned. We discussed the prospect of shouldering all our gear and leaving without them (we were planning on carrying most of it anyway, being fitter and more acclimatized). However, the penalties for being caught in the park without the compulsory guide are severe.

Eventually Joachim and Eric came into view, well lubricated with beer and, we later discovered, carrying a supply of sweet banana wine. We were not amused, and raced off uphill with Joachim and Eric in pursuit, hoping there



Lush moss-groundsels forest in the Bujuku valley, Rwenzori Mountains, Uganda.

was still sufficient daylight to reach the rock-shelter.

We were all soon soaked with sweat in the hot and humid conditions, and the head-down pace gave us no opportunity to appreciate the tangled forest through which we charged. The rock-shelter was reached just as it got dark. I was not as hungry as I had expected after the exertions of the last few hours and shared my meal with an appreciative Joachim and Eric, supplementing their dried fish and banana wine.

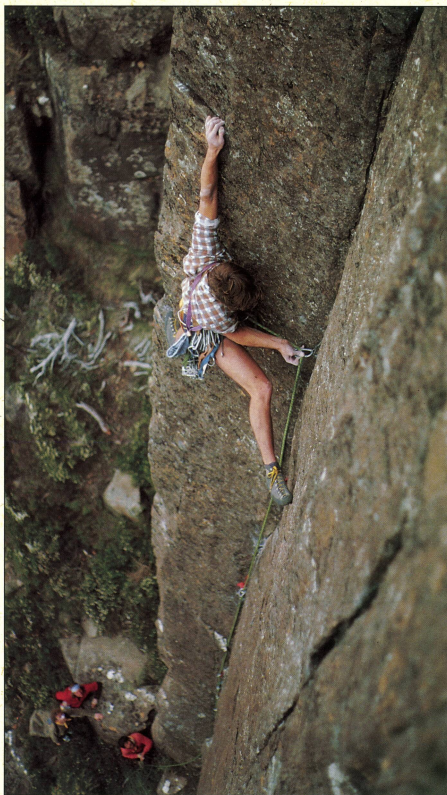
Above the shelter the ridge narrowed and steepened, initially winding through twisted, moss-covered trees and then through open heath with scattered giant groundsels. The view was spectacular. It was early the next morning and the clouds had not yet obscured the

mountain above. The summit of Mt Kilimanjaro was still 2500 metres above us, its South-west Face consisting of the awesome Breach Wall with glaciers tumbling 1000 metres down beside it. Waterfalls could be heard in the shaded depths of the Umbwe Gorge more than 500 metres below.

We crossed the Great Barranco—a broad, deep valley above the Umbwe Gorge—and climbed steeply up its eastern flank to 4300 metres. Joachim and Eric left us, hoping a sprint round the southern flanks of the mountain would see them to Horombo Huts and two comfortable, leisurely and social days with their many relatives and friends amongst fellow guides and porters. They undoubtedly had cause to question our sanity as we plodded further upwards into the grey afternoon cloud. We planned to ascend the Heim Glacier, traverse the summit and meet Joachim

ALL SUMMER

Bruce Cameron looks back with nostalgia on long climbing days in Tasmania



Warm days, blue skies, endless unclimbed rock, camp fires at night and a dozen drunken coppers sprawled around the dying embers of the last log. A typical memory of a climbing trip to Tasmania.

Climbing in Tassie provides a stark contrast to my home cliffs in the Blue Mountains. There are no rings, bolts or chains on the more markedly wilderness-style cliffs; just endless beauty, remoteness and colour.

It is a true mountain experience. A link with the past. A solid walk in to the cliff, a campsite by an alpine tarn set among jumbles of jagged boulders, a rack with Hexes, a pack full of grog, wind, rain and mist.

There would always be a cast of celebrities, usually guided to the latest cliff by the black-bearded 'madman' of Ben Lomond, Robert McMahon. Fantini was always there climbing new routes by the dozen!

On the edge of the Ben Lomond plateau lies Ragged Jack. A series of bluffs and columns which surely provide some of the best crack-climbing in the country. I remember climbing with Fantini on Blood and Iron (22) with his calf muscles bulging and his veins protruding like garden hoses. My memories will never fade; unlike my arms which wasted away near the top of the route, Fantini largely hauling me to the summit so that he could start another new route.

I can still picture Fantini on the top belay of Too Low for Zero (21) at Ragged Jack. The wind was cutting. His swarthy face was etched by the endless exposure to the harsh elements he has encountered while climbing all over the world.

Fantini called out to his second to 'hurry up' as the wind and mist swirled around the buttress in freezing blasts. Fantini is used to poor weather in the mountains; his seconds are used to the occasional verbal encouragement from above to climb faster. All seemed normal for a day on the rock with Fantini. 'Footage, mate, footage', John would always say as the sun was setting; 'time for another route', he would shout to the team as they donned their packs and

Steve Moon on the second ascent of Blood and Iron (22), Ben Lomond plateau, Tasmania. **Right**, three climbing stalwarts—from top: John Fantini, Robert McMahon and Gerry Narkowicz. All photos Bruce Cameron

LONG

walked back to camp. A bottle of red by the fire...a far more appealing attraction.

Greg Moore wouldn't have missed a trip for a new Ducati, his camp-fire repertoire with a beer bottle leaving the team stunned on more than one occasion. Steve 'Moss' Moon and brothers Frank and Will were often there, along with a host of Tasmanians like Smith, Deka and Ling. Many new routes were completed; many memories remain.

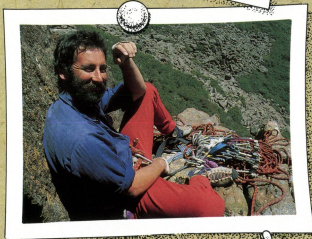
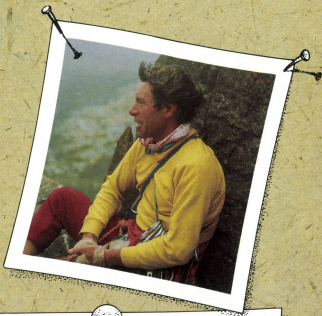
The gallery of onlookers was always amazed at the young powerhouse, Gerry Narkowicz. Tanned, rippling with muscle, tenacious and bold, Narkowicz put in a few good years until one day he found God (in Launceston). The extremist was happy at last—and Tassie lost a great climber.

Precise pillars of stone, fused, cracked and textured, rocketing to the sky in a big mountain landscape are what the Ben Lomond plateau is all about—it is a crack-climbing heaven. How nice to think of the past; memories of good times on the Ben are like red wine: there is never enough, but they get better with the years!

A trip south would usually include a visit to Coles Bay on the east coast. After the Ben it was calming and restful. It gave your minced and bloody hands time to heal. Beautiful walls of granite laid like tombstones against the coastline provide the scene for some spectacular climbing. The clifftop campsite with vast ocean views, set among singing casuarinas, is stunning. A sunny Coles Bay day is a step into wonderland. There are walls, cracks and corners, the standard of the routes so good that you often hope they will never end. By contrast, on a cold, windy day an abseil into one of the many coastline zawns is like being dangled on a string down some gurgling monster's throat.

There are many other great cliffs in Tasmania where people with a sense of adventure and a love of exploration can get away from the more modern scene and step across the line, experience the smell of lichen on the rock, slot a number seven Hex into the back of a crack, build a camp fire, drink a bottle of red and talk about the good old days around the embers of the last log. ■

Bruce Cameron, a rockclimber who lives in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, has been climbing for nearly 20 years. He has been a regular visitor to Tasmania over the last 15 years and he enjoys on-sight adventure routes and the occasional moderate sport route for fun.



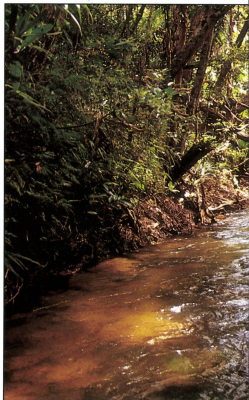
THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG- DISTANCE PADDLER

Peter Treseder's river trips on Cape York Peninsula, by *Ian Brown*

In June 1989 Peter Treseder and four companions were driving slowly along the track to Captain Billy Landing on the distant north-east coast of Cape York Peninsula, wondering from which point they would dive off into the wilds. The top of the legendary Jardine River lurked somewhere to their west and they had come to make the first complete descent, all the way to the sea. Treseder recalls: 'It was stinking hot and the jungle on either side of the road looked impenetrable. The last thing I wanted to do was to get out of the vehicle and disappear into the scrub.'

He was consumed with anxiety about the journey ahead. How far would they have to walk to find navigable water? What would the terrain be like? Would their inflatable canoes be the right craft? 'You worry about all those things, whether you'll fail, or whether you're going to die in there or not be able to come out, but the biggest unknown and what scared me the most were the crocodiles...'

Peter Treseder's introduction to the wild rivers of Cape York Peninsula was typically unorthodox. In 1988 he conceived the notion to attempt the 'mother of all tiger walks': to run the length of mainland Australia from the tip of Cape York to Wilsons Promontory. The first difficulty he encountered, jogging south down the old Telegraph Road on his way to success, was the massive Jardine River, nearly 200 metres wide and flowing deep



and strong—a haunt of saltwater crocodiles. It was dark and he couldn't see the other side but as he doesn't like to waste time, Treseder waded in and started swimming. While claiming to be the 'world's worst canoeist', Treseder once held his high school swimming record for the 50 metres freestyle. Hauling himself out on the other side of the river—still in one piece—he loped off down the road, dripping into the bull-dust.

Some months later Treseder arrived in my living-room to discuss the Jardine River, which had become his latest obsession. He had read that the river had never been completely traversed, and knew that a party of which I had been a member had rafted a large part of it in 1987. The head-waters, however, were unknown. 'When I did my run', Treseder explained, 'Queensland was a huge mystery to me, and Cape York was even more mysterious. What appealed to me about the Jardine was that I had an opportunity to do something within Australia no one else had ever done. That's what attracts me to all my trips.'

Treseder relishes the unknown quality of 'firsts', and the additional challenges they present. He overcomes these obstacles to his exploits through a combination of meticulous planning, an almost naive trust in himself and other people and a sheer determination matched only by his boldness. Uncanny

good luck often seems to follow. Treseder is a living advertisement for the power of positive thinking. As he interrogated me about the Jardine, I could see that he was single-minded right from the start: 'When I go into a trip I gather as much information as I can and try to account for all the problems that may occur. If I've thought of everything, hopefully I won't be surprised.'

The wilds of Cape York Peninsula were a perfect arena for Treseder's questing spirit. Australia's most northerly river, the Jardine is steeped in legend. Its relatively small catchment produces an impressive river of magnificently clear water which continues to flow right through the dry season. Traditionally it was the final and greatest obstacle on the road to Cape York, necessitating a deep and difficult crossing which tested vehicle and passengers. Steadily improving ferry arrangements have now eliminated this obstacle but not the feeling of mystery as to what lies upstream.

The river rises just three kilometres from the east coast and meanders through remote wilderness for 180 kilometres to empty into the Arafura Sea only 30 kilometres south of Torres Strait. The upper catchment is a rolling, sandstone mosaic of rain forest, swamps and scrub, entirely contained in the Jardine River National Park and as unsullied as any wilderness in the country.

With an objective like the Jardine, Treseder had first to round up a suitable party, then solve the logistics of getting to the river. He rang a total stranger—Ron Moon of Melbourne—and put the idea to him. A very seasoned Cape York traveller and author of a guidebook to the region, Moon immediately agreed to participate. He would solve the access and logistic problems. Treseder then roped in two bushwalking mates, Steve Irwin and Warwick Blayden, to complete the paddling party, with Dave Moon to staff the support vehicle.

From the roadside jungle they finally selected a spur which they hoped would get them to the river. Hoisting huge loads—which included deflated canoes and their paddles, and food and equipment for ten days—the four severed their ties to civilization and launched into the uncertainty of the Cape York wilderness. Treseder's first surprise was a pleasant one: 'We got in there and within about three kilometres hit beautiful water right in the headwaters; a pool about two metres deep with big fish swimming around. The river was fantastic, clear water with rain forest overhanging from both sides. Right then and there a lot of the worries I had about walking and navigating through this country came to an end.'

They all jumped up and down like excited children, inflated their boats and paddled off. Cape York had been lashed



'Superman' meets his match? Peter Treseder encounters one of the Jardine River's human-eating crocodiles. Steve Irwin and Ian Brown

with late wet-season storms, which had put plenty of water into the rivers. Unfortunately their jubilation was short-lived. Almost immediately the group was confronted with the first of many complex log jams, forcing them into the water to manoeuvre the boats through a maze of floating obstacles. Progress was slow and tedious for three full days. There were other difficulties: early on the first day one of the canoes suffered a huge rip from a sharp log; patching it used up half of their repair kit. On the second day came another grinding tear. They were all worried, especially Treseder in his capacity as leader: 'We only had enough glue for one more big rip, and that was a real problem—we had a long way to go, our support vehicle had left, and we were getting deeper and deeper into remote country.'

On the third day—still 150 sweat- and adrenalin-drenched kilometres from the sea—Treseder and Irwin got the fright of their lives. 'It scared the living pants off us', Treseder says. 'We came round a corner and suddenly we saw about a five metre croc sunbaking up on a bank, and this thing landed—splat!—right in front

of our boat! We both had the same reaction: wet our pants and back-paddle as fast as we could!' That night was the most depressing of the journey. 'Steve went down sick, we were behind schedule, we had crocodiles all around us and our boats were vulnerable. We felt really lousy.'

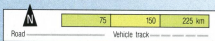
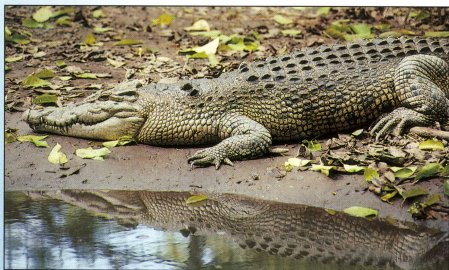
It was with great relief that they passed the confluence of the unnamed eastern branch of the Jardine early on the fourth day. The river was now much more substantial, travel easier and the bitter-sweet challenge of the unknown was at an end. The rest of the river had been paddled before. Backed by a fast flow, they pushed hard for two days to make the 90 kilometres to the Telegraph Road crossing and relative safety. The middle reaches of the river surge through avenues of rain forest and paperbarks, and feature huge sandbanks, deep bends and water-lilies. There are no significant flows to break the smooth and powerful flood.

Travelling light, the canoeists tackled the final wide and sluggish stretch to the river mouth on their sixth day. 'Down the end of the river, we had to get out and walk. There we were, sloshing around up

to our knees with the banks a kilometre away on either side. It was really quite daunting. You've got these big monsters floating around and *you* form part of their diet!'

Five years later, what does he think of the trip? 'It was fantastic, the country is really remote and very beautiful. (We saw cassowaries on the side of the river.) It's the remoteness and the wildness of the place that attracts.' His appetite was whetted, and for someone of Treseder's drive there is no respite. With one achievement accomplished, it was on to something else. 'Even while we were packing up on the beach, I was already thinking about what I was going to do next.'

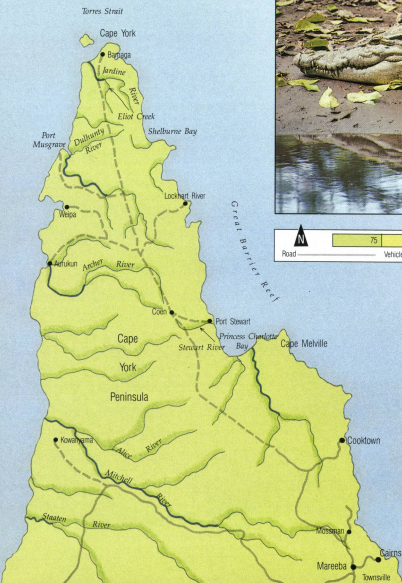
What he intended to do next—along with Ron Moon and Steve Irwin from the Jardine and newcomer Dave Dickford—was the mighty Archer River. Driving up the Peninsula in June 1990, they soon realized that a late wet season had defeated them. Ironically, although there was plenty of water, the rains had made it impossible to get a vehicle to the river mouth to get them out at the end of their descent. The disappointed party travelled north, casting about for another



An estuarine crocodile smiles at the sight of passing fools in inflatable kayaks. **Brown, Right,** wrong way, go back. **Brown, Far right,** Peter Treseder on the upper Eliot Creek with Ron Moon and Dave Dickford behind. **Irwin**

suitable objective. At Moon's suggestion they aimed for the unnavigated Dulhunty River, resolving to warm up on Eliot Creek.

Eliot Creek is a major tributary of the Jardine, entering it near the Telegraph Road crossing. It rises in low hills and flows north for 80 kilometres. Running close to the Telegraph Road, it is readily accessible, with two popular campsites on its banks. In his usual thorough fashion, Treseder wanted to make sure that it would be a *full* descent of the stream, so they started walking from the very top of the catchment, inflatable rafts on their backs. At first they followed a



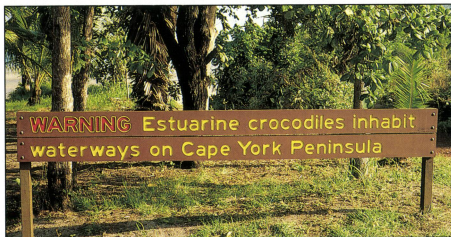
trickle through beautiful open country with fields of pitcher plants. When the trickle had swelled to a flow, the rafts were launched and they followed the pristine creek down through layers of sandstone. Treseder was delighted: 'It was just fantastic: rapids, deep pools—the whole lot.'

In a very long day, the party made it to the first vehicle access at Flying Fox Falls (where they swapped to Canadian canoes) and then on to Eliot Falls. An early start on the second day had them pushing through the final 50 kilometres to the Jardine, at first through more cascades and pools. Treseder's canoeing skills were put to the test: 'We couldn't

crocodiles all around us—that I'd never get in a boat again, as soon as we reached the beach at the Jardine I was planning the Dulhunty.'

The difficulty of just getting to a river and getting out again is one of the greatest obstacles to any would-be river-runner on Cape York Peninsula, even one with Treseder's bull-terrier tenacity. The Dulhunty poses special problems: it empties into the vast Port Musgrave on the west coast, one of the major crocodile breeding areas in Queensland, and the final section of the trip would involve a 20 kilometre paddle across the estuary to the nearest vehicle access. The group managed to force their

achieved. If you'd been in Cairns early in June 1991, you might have seen a determined, slightly distracted fellow in spectacles driving a hire-car fast towards Mareeba on the Atherton Tableland, complete with a freshly purchased old kayak sticking ridiculously through the sun-roof. Treseder stashed the boat at a point on the longest of the many sources of the Mitchell River, went back to the top and started running. He was completely alone and unsupported.



risk falling into the water [because of] crocodiles, so whenever we came to a set of waterfalls we'd get out and drag the canoes round. One time we decided to give it a go. The boat turned sideways and filled with water and we were tossed out. My leg got stuck in some rocks and my immediate thought was that I was going to drown, because the water was forcing my head under. I finally got my foot out, then I thought I was going to be eaten by a crocodile!

In fact, they saw no sign of 'Gulf goannas' in the upper reaches, but as they got down towards the confluence with the Jardine River the creek left the rocky terrain and flowed through more gentle country: crocodile country. 'We'd try and keep the canoes close together to present a much bigger profile to scare off the crocodiles', Treseder recalls. '[On one occasion] we came round a corner into a huge lily-pond, and a crocodile came aquaplaning with its head out of the water, right towards the first canoe as if it was charging. It finally dropped down and submerged right in front of the canoe, and we all went flying out of there. We had a few experiences that really put the wind up us. By the time we reached the junction we were all pretty nerve-racked.'

'We wanted to do the Dulhunty next, but there was still disparity in the group about whether we wanted to subject ourselves to more crocodiles. While I had said to myself on the Eliot—when we had

way through fallen trees and a tidal bog on an obscure track to reach the tidal section of the river. This would be their depot and their exit point.

The Dulhunty River turned out to be a pleasant walk and paddle of 120 kilometres but was even worse than Eliot Creek for crocodiles. They would come swimming towards the boats, and only submerge at the last second. 'We'd see this huge shape passing under us, and sometimes they'd bump or scrape the bottom of the boat', recalls Treseder. The situation was threatening and emotionally draining, and by the time they'd reached their depot they had had enough. The lower river traversed an inhospitable terrain of swamps, mangroves, mosquitoes and more crocodiles; there were no campsites. Treseder was still focused on completing the whole river, so he and Moon took the outboard dinghy to the river mouth and back in a tense race against tides and engine failure.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Treseder had great difficulty raising a party for a third season of paddling Cape York rivers. He was still keen on adding the Archer to his bag of rivers, but it seemed as if everyone else had experienced enough close calls and constant stress in the wilds. It must take more than fear to stop Treseder: he went it alone. With just two weeks available for the expedition, however, there was great uncertainty as to what he could get done and how it could be



The Mitchell rises in the mountains behind Cairns and runs some 700 kilometres to the Gulf of Carpentaria near the Aboriginal town of Kowanyama. With a mean annual flow of twelve million megalitres, this is one of Australia's greatest rivers. Like the Jardine River and Eliot Creek, some of it had been paddled before, but Treseder intended to make the first complete and continuous descent. Most people would be appalled at the prospect of setting off alone on an immense journey through such lonely country with only a minimum of gear. Treseder is no different—he was terrified as well.

His way of coping with the fear was to put his head down and go for it, paddling almost continuously day and night with very little rest. He recalls: 'The main problem was fatigue, and canoeing an unknown river at night. You can see more crocs at night because of their eyes. That became very off-putting.'

'On none of the rivers that I've done have crocodiles stayed on the bank. It's always like a Tarzan movie where you can look down the beaches and see them sliding into the river in front of you. In one case the croc obviously didn't hear

me, because I was pretty quiet. I came round the corner—the croc was asleep on a sandy bank about a metre high. [Upon hearing me] it came off the bank trying to get into the water. It wasn't trying to get me, but it landed on the front of my boat. It would've been about five metres long and weighed at least half a tonne, and just flipped the boat over end to end. I ended up in the water, I lost all my gear and my boat went floating off to the other side of the river. Nothing on this earth was going to get me back into the river so I swam out to my side—which was only a metre or two—then had to go back up the river, cross at a shallow rapid and collect my boat. From then on I kept my gear on my back.'

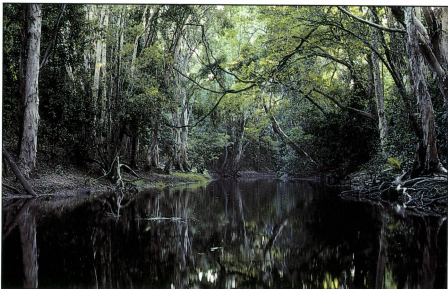
What little gear he carried was very important: food, a few clothes, maps and compass, water-bottle, headtorch and emergency items.

Crocodiles weren't the only faunal hazard: 'I was trying to get some sleep one night when a wild pig chased me up a tree. I'd done a first aid course the week before at work and had learnt the collar-and-cuff sling, so I used that to tie myself into the tree, a big melaleuca, because I didn't want to fall out. The branch I'd crawled up hung over the river and I could see eyes in there.' Treseder spent five hours up the tree while the pig rooted around below and the crocodiles brooded.

With incredible luck, Treseder paddled out into the Mitchell estuary after five days and found two fishermen in a shark boat. They took him and his boat 280 kilometres north to Weipa, where he talked two American tourists—they thought he was Crocodile Dundee—into helping him to execute his next objective. Treseder convinced the pair—who were in the area to fish—that they should fish Port Stewart, which would enable him to snaffle the Stewart River. The Stewart rises in the McIlwraith Range near Coen and flows 110 kilometres to the east. It was just a day trip for Treseder, running the top half and then frequently dragging his boat over sand between big pools, watched by large crocodiles in the lower reaches. It was, for Treseder, a sort of rest day before the next big effort.

Beyond the Stewart River rises the highest mountain on the Peninsula, a misty, unnamed point in the McIlwraith Range 824 metres above the sparkling waters of the Great Barrier Reef. The dense rain forest feeds the head-waters of the mysterious Archer River, which runs

down through spectacular gorge country to arrive at the west coast near Aurukun some 320 kilometres further on. Treseder followed it from its high source, first on foot and then with his kayak. As he descended the mountain gorges he saw some of Cape York's special wildlife, including a cuscus and a rare green python. The Archer country was just beautiful: melaleuca swamps with lots of lorikeets feeding in the blossoms, coming in huge flocks.'



The still waters of Peach Creek (upper Archer River), Cape York Peninsula. *Brown*

Again, fatigue and the stress of travelling at night were major problems for Treseder. The thing I remember most about the crocs in the Archer was the barking sound they made at night, and their eyes in the water. There are lots and lots of crocs in the Archer.' Nevertheless the fabulous Archer River, which had probably never been paddled before, succumbed without incident to a blitz from the Treseder 'machine' in three days of grinding toil. Nature did, however, throw one spanner into the works of this particular 'machine' at the end of the journey.

Treseder had paddled right to the mouth of the river and was heading back into the estuary intending to cross the bay to Aurukun and fly out. Without warning, something grabbed the back of his kayak: 'It was like being in a washing-machine, with this thing of enormous power thrashing around with the boat. I never saw it, but it must have

been a big crocodile. I was tipped out and swam the 50 metres to shore, very fast. I reckon I broke my old school record! When I turned around, the boat was missing its last 20 centimetres and was floating out into the Gulf.' Luckily he was still carrying his gear on his back; his predicament, however, was grim.

'I was stuck out there in the middle of nowhere. Aurukun was ten kilometres across the bay with a very hungry crocodile in the middle of it, and there

was no way to get there. I felt bloody lonely.' With thousands of kilometres of solitary travel in the wilds behind him, Treseder had the skill and nerve not only to escape this very serious situation, but to turn it to his advantage. He went for the obvious but unlikely solution and ran home across the vast and featureless plains under the beating sun. He had always wanted to run across the Peninsula, anyway. Lack of water was his major worry—he uses a lot of it—so he tried to stay near the river. Untracked bush led to a series of vehicle tracks that took him back towards Coen. In order to make it a 'coast-to-coast' he jogged on to Port Stewart. Treseder demolished the 250 kilometres in only two days.

Treseder's tally on Cape York is impressive: six complete rivers and more than 1500 kilometres of paddling, 1100 kilometres by himself, probably all first complete descents and in admirable style. So, has Peter Treseder finished with Cape York? Have the crocodiles beaten him? Not likely. There are still unexplored corners and trips to be done. The wonder and challenge of this great wilderness still appeal to him. He seems to be driven in his solitary quests to confront his deepest fears, which he insists include heights, water—and crocodiles. No doubt, like the crew of the starship 'Enterprise', he will continue to 'boldly go where no one has gone before'.

Ian Brown (see Contributors in *Wild* no 28) has been a keen outdoors person for many years and is a writer and photographer with a special interest in Cape York Peninsula.

Peter Treseder's Cape York river trips

Date	River	River length	Trip length	Party
June 1989	Jardine	180 km	six days	Warwick Blayden, Steve Irwin, Ron Moon
June 1990	Eliot Crk	80 km	two days	Dave Dickford, Steve Irwin, Ron Moon
June 1990	Dulhunty	120 km	three days	as above
June 1991	Mitchell	700 km	five days	solo
June 1991	Stewart	110 km	one day	solo
June 1991	Archer	320 km	three days	solo

SUNSHINE STATE

Reflections on Queensland's natural beauty, by *Rob Stevens*







Left, spider's web on Lake Poona, Cooloolo National Park, south-east Queensland. **Below**, Warrawillah Creek at Little Ramsey Bay, Hinchinbrook Island, north Queensland. **Page 59**, Running Creek Falls, Lamington National Park, south-east Queensland.

Rob Stevens is a 29-year-old computer systems analyst from Brisbane who has been bushwalking for ten years. Initially using a camera to record scenes from walks, he now finds that a walk isn't worth while unless it is photogenic.



The ^{un}Flooding Lake Pedder

Geoff Mosley examines the environmental equivalent of raising the *Titanic*

At the end of January 1994 the General Assembly of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature—the world conservation union—at its 19th Session held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, passed a resolution calling upon the Governments of Tasmania and the Commonwealth of Australia to investigate the feasibility of the restoration of Lake Pedder. The first shot in the bold and imaginative campaign to restore one of Australia's greatest natural wonders had been fired.

News of the beginning of the campaign has been greeted with feelings which range from relief and excitement to sheer bewilderment and even downright hostility. 'Lake Pedder restored? What a preposterous idea' has been the reaction of some people.

Lake Pedder was drowned over 20 years ago. The artificially impounded waters have covered it continuously since mid-1972. Is it not disrespectful to disturb the dead, especially a feature which in death taught us so much about the need for environmental respect? Is it not better to keep intact the memories of the lake in its untainted glory even if, for many, it is an image garnered only from old photographs?

Such questions raise the vital unknown of whether Lake Pedder and its surrounding environment are really dead. What will the lake be like if it is unflooded? What about the cost; is it worth it? Are there not more important issues which deserve the time and financial resources of the environment movement? The persuasive answering of these

Frankland Peak towers above the extraordinary rippled beach of Lake Pedder, 1972. *Les Southwell.*
Opposite, a view from the Frankland Range of Lakes Pedder and Maria, with the Coronets and the Sentinel Range behind, 1972. *David Neilson*



of

WILD CONSERVATION



key questions will be the very heart of any successful campaign to restore the lake.

In the early 1970s, as the second attempt was made to save Lake Pedder, the issue of its drowning received headline attention in the daily newspapers. Lake Pedder became a household name. Long before the 1994 restoration campaign began, its name lived on even amongst schoolchildren born after it sank without trace under the dark, peat-stained waters of the Huon-Serpentine impoundment.

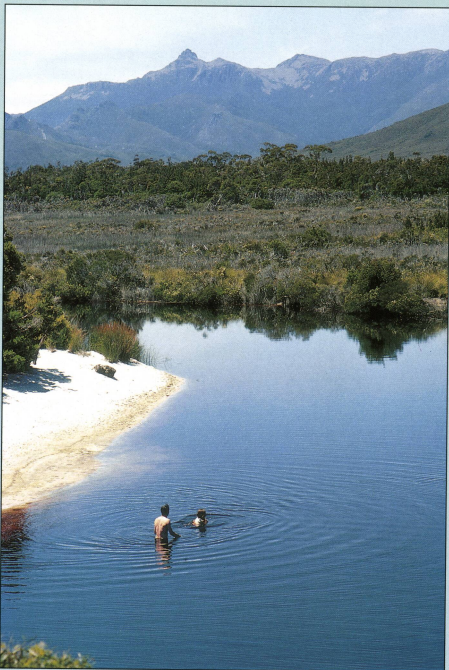
Lake Pedder was the first truly national conservation issue in Australia. The second campaign to save it came at the time of the greatest surge of public interest in conservation in our history. The people's sentiment was that it should be saved but the mechanisms of government had still to catch up. The Commonwealth Government doubted its constitutional power to override the decision of a State government and lacked the political will to do so. In 1973, World Heritage listing of the Western Tasmanian Wilderness National Parks was still nine years in the future.

The context for restoration is completely different. Doubts about the Commonwealth's power to intervene were extinguished with the saving of the Franklin River in 1983 and the objective of restoring Lake Pedder is well within the Commonwealth's legitimate sphere as a protector of World Heritage Areas.

The fundamental aim of the campaign is clear: to restore a large, significant and strategic part of one of the world's most important World Heritage Areas.

There is little doubt that the successful restoration of Lake Pedder would bring important advantages to Australians of our generation but the benefits could be much wider than this: the restoration might stand as an international symbol of the value of environmental rehabilitation, and for centuries to come people might enjoy and gain understanding from the restored area and the events which brought it back to life from a watery grave.

Two things are at the core of the issue: the question of feasibility, and our attitude towards nature. Cost is not a



Mt Anne provides a majestic backdrop to two swimmers in Maria Creek, in 1972. *Southwell.* **Right**, a popular way of starting walking trips in South-west Tasmania was to fly in to Lake Pedder, as these people did in 1972. *Peter Dombrovskis*

hollow amongst glacial outwash material. Technically it is classified as a glacial outwash impoundment lake. The outwash came from cirque glaciers on the flanks of the Frankland Range located immediately to the south of the broad plain of the Serpentine River. In effect, the lake was impounded by a barrier composed of a thick apron of outwash material stretching across the valley. The same outwash aprons, or fans, have pushed the Serpentine River to the north side of the valley.

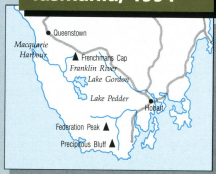
Lake Pedder is a product of the most recent ice-age. Until its geographic identity was lost from view by inundation, the lake had most likely existed for at least 10 000 years although recent research indicates that it may have existed even before the last glacial maximum. We can see relics of the forces which created the barrier and the lake if we look at the hollow, armchair-like

consideration: if something is worth doing we will do it. We must count the cost, of course, but it must not dissuade us if the other factors are in favour of action.

If the lake has been too badly damaged by inundation, the case for restoration will be weaker. And what about the plains which surround the lake? What are the prospects for their revegetation? Before I provide some answers to these questions it is important to describe the natural environment of the region, its value, and how we came to lose it.

Lake Pedder (and I refer to how it once was and can be again) is the sole example in Australia, and one of the best in the world, of a shallow lake occupying a

South-west Tasmania, 1994



cirques and cirque lakes near the crest of the range and the moraines (which run down the slopes) that show where glaciers once extended down almost to the plains. The glaciers which sculpted the mountain slopes probably survived for several thousand years after the end of the coldest period and, as they retreated, periglacial (freeze-thaw) processes continued the work of sculpting the range at a slower pace, to be succeeded eventually by the processes of fluvial (water-related) erosion.

Out of our sight beneath the waters of the reservoir is not only Lake Pedder; there are also the outwash/alluvial fans which made up the barrier behind which the lake formed. As the depositional material built up on the valley floor the Serpentine lost its cutting power and a series of meanders and billabongs developed, hence its name.

Powerful westerly winds—along with wave action—may have helped to deepen the lake bed during a drier period which some scientists believe occurred between 6000 and 3000 years ago. The lake has the shape of a rectangle with sides of 3.5 kilometres and 2.75 kilometres, respectively, and covers 9.7 square kilometres. Its maximum depth in summer was a little over three metres when last surveyed. Winter depths were only about 25 centimetres deeper but, because of the gently sloping nature of the eastern lake bed, the difference was sufficient to expose a large, sandy beach 600 metres broad and 2.75 kilometres long.

Comprised of fine-grained fractions of quartzite, this pinkish-hued beach was one of the most striking features of Lake Pedder, but what made it truly memorable was the surface pattern of large ripples, or 'subaqueous dunes', on the part of the beach nearest to the water's edge. These patterns projected herringbone-fashion into the water. Cross-ripples, related to the circulation of

the lake's water, made for a complex feature of great interest and beauty.

Behind the beach is a seven to eight metre high dune, or lunette, containing material either blown out of the lake bed during the theorized dry period, or swept up from the beach. The dune has a steep face on the lake side which indicates that it was gradually extending eastwards. Still further east, behind the

logged to support trees, the plains were mainly covered with a sedge vegetation dominated by button grass. As in similar parts of South-west Tasmania, trees and shrubs grew only in better drained conditions along the banks of the rivers and creeks. There was also a forested area of tangled tea-tree, melaleuca and eucalypts growing on the slopes of the dunes.



dunes, is a series of swampy lagoons known collectively as Lake Maria. Each has a minilunette at its eastern end.

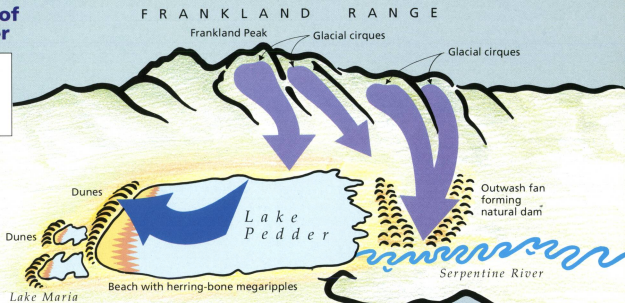
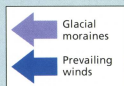
A barely perceptible rise separates the head of the Serpentine catchment east of Lake Pedder from the Huon River Plains. Not far from where the Huon was dammed by the Scotts Peak Dam is another lake—the small, shallow Lake Edgar whose creation was associated with downward movement on the Lake Edgar Fault.

This area of Tasmania is one of the wettest parts of Australia and the broad valleys of the Huon and Serpentine were blanketed with peat. Being too water-

In many ways the land-forms of the Huon-Serpentine Plains and their relationship to the Franklands are similar to those of the Arthur Plains and the Western Arthur Range further south. They have the same fluvio-glacial land-forms and vegetation. But it was the existence of additional land-forms—the lakes and their dunes—which made the Serpentine valley exceptional. In it was contained the full suite of features associated with the ice-age glaciation.

Nor was the distinctiveness just a matter of the area's land-forms. Specially adapted to the shallow water and the sandy lake bed were a number of plants

Formation of Lake Pedder



and animals. In the early 1970s, 18 aquatic species were thought to be endemic to Lake Pedder. They included a shrimp-like syncarid crustacea (*Allanaspides helonomus*), two galaxiid freshwater fish (*Galaxias pedderensis* and *Galaxias parvus*), a snail, three species of caddis fly and the Lake Pedder earthworm (*Perionychia pedderensis*).

The water in the lake was very acidic and low in bicarbonate and as a result there was little phytoplankton. Most food for life in Lake Pedder came from the break-up of plant debris washed in by streams.

The story of how Lake Pedder came to be flooded can be found in books such as Les Southwell's *The Mountains of Paradise* and Bob Brown's *Lake Pedder*.

The approach used by the Tasmanian Government for its Middle Gordon Power Scheme was to sacrifice Lake Pedder by drowning it beneath a huge impoundment the purpose of which was to divert water from the Serpentine and Huon Rivers into the main storage reservoir—Lake Gordon. Without the Huon diversion, which contributed only 10 per cent of the power-station water, this would not have been necessary. When the scheme went for parliamentary approval in 1967 the public had little or no information about alternatives. The power was said to be urgently needed and, it was argued, should be produced for the least possible cost. Unfortunately, when in 1973 the Federal Government adopted the recommendation of the Lake Pedder Committee of Enquiry (LPCE) for a moratorium on the flooding, to be followed by the Commonwealth paying for modifications of the scheme, it still left the decision to the Tasmanian Government, which promptly rejected the moratorium offer. The Commonwealth Government had doubts about its constitutional power to intervene, and thus did not introduce overriding legislation.

It was the drowning of Lake Pedder—clearly a national asset—which more than any other factor spurred the Commonwealth Government to develop a role in environmental protection. Any lingering doubts were ended with the events which followed Australia's involvement with the World Heritage Convention.

The second fight to save Lake Pedder ended in early 1974 when it was conceded that the defence of the Southern Forests and opposition to the plans to build another dam on the Gordon had a higher priority. At the very time when the campaign was abandoned Australia signed the World Heritage Convention, which came into force in 1975. The LPCE had identified Lake Pedder as an area of international conservation significance.

In 1980 the Lowe Government, as part of an attempt to stop the building of the Gordon-below-Franklin dam, proposed

the nomination of the by then greatly expanded National Parks of western Tasmania for the World Heritage List. The area was inscribed on the list in 1982 paving the way for federal intervention to stop the dam, a decision upheld by the High Court in July 1983. In 1987 the Federal Government also halted logging in the Southern Forests and the Lemonthyme and, in 1989, with the Stage 2 World Heritage nomination accepted, the 'Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area' covered 1.38 million hectares. The site had satisfied a world record of seven out of the ten possible World Heritage criteria.

Two decisions related to these events are important for the Lake Pedder restoration campaign. The first was the inclusion in the 1982 World Heritage Area of the Huon-Serpentine impoundment, but not Lake Gordon. The second was the decision of 1989 not to admit Lake Gordon as part of the Stage 2 addition on the grounds that it was unlikely to be restored, whereas there was a possibility that Lake Pedder would be.

The restoration campaign got off to a false start in early 1990 when the proposition was inadvertently aired as part of the federal election campaign for the seat of Denison. The reaction of the Tasmanian Government showed that much more careful preparation, and a national campaign, would be essential. Thus in mid-1992 the Lake Pedder Study Group was formed with three members each from Tasmania and Victoria. The task of the group was to gather facts relevant to restoration and plan the campaign. The studies covered a number of aspects including the condition of the drowned landscape, the prospects for restoration of the plants and animals, and

the energy and engineering aspects of the unflooding.

From mid-1972 on, Pedder could only be saved if the water already impounded was released through the Scotts Peak and Serpentine Dams. Addressing the matter of damage to the drowned lake the LPCE expressed the opinion that:

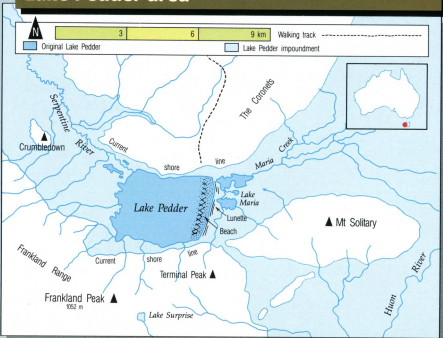
...if Lake Pedder were to be re-exposed its beauty would return irrespective of the length of time the Lake had been flooded...

Pedder has been flooded for over 20 years. What impact has there been? A geophysical survey has been carried out for the study group by a team led by Professor Peter Tyler of Deakin University and the detailed results are to be published in the scientific literature. Overall, however, the findings of the survey have been extremely encouraging.

Beneath the murky waters of the Huon-Serpentine impoundment the land-forms of Lake Pedder and the surrounding area have been little affected by either siltation or erosion. The dunes are still intact (the trees on them creating a boating hazard) as are Lake Maria, the Maria Creek channel into Lake Pedder and the Serpentine outlet. The megaripples on the beach have survived. The sediment layer has barely affected the Pedder Pennies (ferromanganese concretions) which lie on parts of the lake bed. On the plains decomposition of the vegetation is incomplete, the soil still bound by roots.

The only erosion damage has been in the rise and fall zone on the reservoir edge, where wave action has created a major scar. Had the impoundment not filled rapidly, wave and wind action would have severely damaged the dunes

Lake Pedder area



and this could happen again if the unflooding of the lake is not handled carefully.

Studies of the conservation status of the Lake Pedder biota have been made by both Professor Tyler and Dr Sam Lake. In the years which have elapsed since the frantic surveys of the 1960s and 1970s all the plants thought to have been endemic to Lake Pedder have been located elsewhere in the South-west so that they can be relocated where necessary in the restored lake.

The position regarding the supposedly endemic fauna is more complicated. Of those still considered to be endemic to Lake Pedder some, such as the Lake Pedder earthworm, have survived in the impoundment; others have not. Some other animals have now, like the plants, been found elsewhere in the South-west. Specimens of the endangered Pedder Galaxias have been placed in a lake in the Western Arthurs as a conservation measure and these can be returned to Pedder when conditions are right. The end result will be the restoration of much, but not all, of the characteristic aquatic fauna. An essential part of the reintroduction will be the removal of the introduced trout—a difficult task in itself.

Away from Lake Pedder the main rehabilitation tasks will probably be along the impoundment shore line. Nature alone would take many years to heal this eroded area. Experience elsewhere suggests that the button grass will return without much help but this may take several decades.

The study group's report on the engineering aspects of the proposed restoration was prepared by civil engineering consultant Douglas Hill, who was a member of the LPCE in the early 1970s.

The water from the Huon and Serpentine Rivers contributes about 40 per cent of the output from the Gordon power scheme. According to Energy Minister Robin Gray, the total contribution of the Gordon power-station equals 13 per cent of Tasmania's total power supply so that the Huon-Serpentine impoundment contribution is just over 5 per cent. If only the Huon diversion were eliminated, the loss would be 1.3 per cent plus pumping energy for a Serpentine-only diversion.

There are possible developments on both the energy-demand and energy-supply side which relate to the future of Lake Pedder although the case for restoration is not dependent on any of them. If the Comalco aluminium smelter were to close down, as is possible, there would be a demand reduction of 240 megawatts—far greater than the contribution of the Huon and Serpentine water to the power supply. Similarly, interconnection of the electricity grid with the mainland would allow the import of thermal energy. There is also

the possibility of reducing demand through energy conservation.

The reaction of the Tasmanian Government and the Hydro-Electric Commission (HEC) to the IUCN resolution was muted compared with 1990 but again the difficulties were exaggerated. In a rejection statement, Robin Gray said that draining the lake was simply not an option on either financial or environmental grounds. The HEC chief executive Graeme Longbottom said that

The odour from rotting vegetation might be offensive for a time.

Fortunately, the management arrangements for the World Heritage Area which involve both the Commonwealth and the State, and in particular the device of the management plan, provide the means by which all these questions can be dealt with and the public consulted on these and other longer-term matters (such as the future of the Scotts Peak Dam and Scotts Peak Road). The Commonwealth



Kamarooka campsite, nestled in the Maria Creek dunes. This 1972 photograph, incidentally, is as good a time capsule of bushwalking in the early 1970s as we have seen. *Southwell*

revegetation would have wide-ranging implications. In 1990 the HEC said that the area would be a large, smelly mud pool and that '...the original Lake Pedder beach would most likely be gone'. In 1990 it estimated the cost of revegetation at \$20 million. Longbottom also said that replacing the lost power capacity with a similar scheme would cost \$100 to \$150 million.

The proposed restoration of Lake Pedder raises a number of issues relating to how the area would be managed as part of the World Heritage Area. Before flooding, the area was a part of the western Tasmanian wilderness. At present the Frankland Range on the west shore of the impoundment is zoned 'wilderness' in the 1992 Plan of Management for the World Heritage Area whereas the Sentinel Range on the opposite side is part of the 'recreation' zone. Where will the boundary between them be located after the lake and the plains have been reclaimed? From 1946 to 1972 light aircraft landed on the Pedder beach as an alternative means of access to walking. Should the lake continue to be accessible by aircraft? The future of camping in the area will need to be considered especially as there is likely to be a long rehabilitation period during which the difficult tasks of revegetating the dunes and other areas is undertaken.

has already provided Tasmania with very large sums of money as compensation and for management, establishing a firm precedent for the costs to be borne by all Australians even though eventually the most direct beneficiaries will be Tasmanians through their tourist industry.

The Tasmanian World Heritage Area is one of the world's finest and the Commonwealth's powers to meet the costs are tried and tested. So the future of Lake Pedder should now depend only upon our view of the worth of its restored natural environment. If Tasmania is prepared to base its future to a greater extent on its unique natural endowments, the loss of a little power will be seen in a different light.

In the present campaign the generation which lost the struggle to save the lake—but never gave up the idea of its rescue—joins with a younger generation who can make all the difference to the prospects of success for this audacious project. In the end they, and others, will be able to have the unforgettable experience of walking out on to a broad beach, knowing that not only had nature won the day at Lake Pedder but that its restoration had provided the most dramatic demonstration ever of the importance of the natural world in the life of the planet and its people. ■

Geoff Mosley was co-founder of the Canberra Bushwalking Club and its first honorary life member, but he is better known for his role as a conservation leader. He was Director of the Australian Conservation Foundation from 1973 to 1986.

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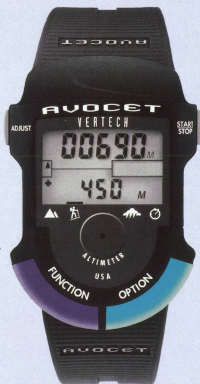
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CAPITAL WALKING

Bushwalking in the Canberra region, with *Martin Chalk*

Few who live and work in Canberra realize the significance of the mountainous southern half of the Australian Capital Territory. Not so the nation's early planners, for they recognized this region's capacity to supply the new capital with high-quality drinking-water. But it is not just this area's water that is of high quality: for those who enjoy the rucksack sports so, too, are the challenges on offer in this spectacular region. The Aborigines called it Namadgi, and that is the name of the National Park.

Namadgi National Park covers some 100 000 hectares and contains extensive grassland, particularly around the old grazing properties of Gudgenby and Orrorral. Wet and dry sclerophyll forest predominates in the central ranges of the park, while the sub-alpine western regions along the Brindabella and Bimberi Ranges boast one of Australia's higher mountains, Bimberi Peak (1911 metres). To the south and west the park is bordered by the Kosciuszko National Park and by the Scabby Range and Bimberi Nature Reserves of New South Wales.

The two-day walk described below is in the central region of Namadgi known as the Bimberi Wilderness.

When to visit

Spring and autumn provide the most comfortable weather conditions for walking in this region. However, spring weather can be temperamental—I can vouch for snow in November. Cold changes, rain and snow are regular features of winter—although a clear day will provide magnificent views—while summer can bring high temperatures and fire hazards. Occasionally the park is closed due to the fire risk.

Maps

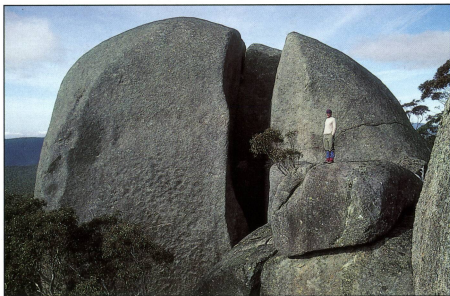
The best maps to this area are the NSW Central Mapping Authority 1:25 000 issues *Corin Dam* (8626-I-N) and *Rendezvous Creek* (8626-I-S). Both maps should be carried on this walk although neither shows any foot tracks.

Access

Namadgi National Park can be reached from Canberra by a sealed road through the hamlet of Tharwa. Once in Tharwa, follow the Boboyan road south towards Adaminaby. (Be warned that there are no services between Tharwa and Adaminaby—don't run out of petrol!)

The road now follows a broad valley to the farming region of Naas. Continue past Naas over Fitz Hill until the junction with the Orrorral road is reached some 50 kilometres south of Canberra.

The Orrorral road was built in the 1960s to support the NASA space tracking station of Orrorral. Although the tracking station is now gone, this sealed road provides valuable access to Namadgi by way of the Orrorral valley. Proceed along the road to a locked gate (colloquially known as the Orrorral Gate). The gate is adjacent to a small car-park from which



The observatory-like profile of the main boulder at Cotter Rocks. *John Worthy*

the foundations of the tracking station can be seen to the north-east.

Alternatively, the Orrorral road can be reached from the south by way of Adaminaby and Shannons Flat. Most of the Boboyan road in this direction is unsealed. However, those who plan to approach the region from the south might find this a better option than driving into Canberra first.

Permits

No camping permit is required for the walk described here. But the Canberra water-supply catchment area around the Cotter River is managed and permits are required for this area. For further information, contact Namadgi National Park by telephoning (06) 237 5222.

Fire permits are required for all open fires, but not for fuel stoves. Permits can be obtained from the ACT Bush Fire Brigade; phone (06) 207 8603.

If you plan to camp in an area where a camping permit is needed, the permit number will have to be quoted to the Bush Fire Brigade to obtain a fire permit.

The walk

The walk starts on a fire track, access to which is gained at a stile at the Orrorral Gate car-park. The fire track parallels the Orrorral valley and gradually climbs as it enters the dry forest which is typical of this cool locality. After a while the track climbs more steeply and moves away from the valley to the south-west. After an hour of steady walking, a clearing will be evident to the right set back off the track. Here is a rain-gauging station which resembles a large, grey milk-churn topped by a chimney. This conspicuous human artifact is

important not only to park managers but also to the walker—it indicates the approaching turn-off point.

A few metres beyond this, the track crosses *Prairie Dog Creek* and negotiates a small rise. The top of the rise is marked by a collection of granite boulders on the right, opposite which is the turn-off to Cotter Gap.

This foot track is less distinct but nevertheless quite obvious. Its orientation is roughly that of an old bridle-track used by the early settlers of the region. The track undulates through wet sclerophyll forest which can be a pleasure on dry, cool days—or somewhat miserable in the rain or in the heat of midsummer. The terrain is quite easy although the last 300 metres to the gap itself are guaranteed to bring warmth to the nether regions of the body.

The gap is a good spot in which to rest and have a snack before the climb to Cotter Rocks. (The Cotter Gap to which I refer is at 704562 on the *Rendezvous Creek* map; it is *not* the one marked on the map, which indicates the whole broad valley.) Cotter Gap is one of many frost hollows in Namadgi National Park. The combination of cool air draining off the surrounding hills at night and the high elevation causes close to zero or subzero overnight temperatures for a good part of the year. Consequently, young trees are denied the chance to grow—a grassy flat is the result. In addition, these hollows are usually the sources of creeks and abound with water-saturated sphagnum. This combination makes for good camping spots. However, one should bear in mind that sphagnum is quite delicate, and should not be trampled on.

After a rest, the hard work begins. Cotter Rocks (not named on the map) are immediately above the gap to the south-west. They

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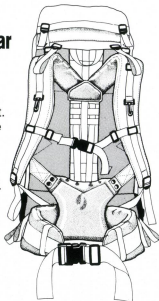
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are quite obvious by the granite outcrops which top the hill. The trackless access rises 200 metres over a distance of 700 metres through tea-tree and eucalypt. By diverging to the left of the peak around 10' the worst of the rocks on the approach can be avoided. After about 30 to 40 minutes of climbing, the terrain levels out into a stand of snow gums and mountain gums which give way to alpine ash as you near Cotter Rocks.

Cotter Rocks themselves are not visible until you are reasonably close as some regrowth blocks the view. This collection of boulders provides hours of exploration, photography and solace. Of particular interest is a large, double-dog-leg fracture through the main boulder. Its sheer, vertical sides invoke a feeling of awe and supply rockclimbing opportunities and a time-check for the navigator's chronometer ('meridian passage' for the purists).

Keep an eye on the time, particularly in the winter months, as this place tends to engross those who explore it and you still need to find a camping spot. Allow 90 minutes before sunset to travel the two kilometres south-east to Rock Flats to make camp. The course is through snow gum and mountain gum forest with minimal obstruction by the understorey.

Rock Flats is another frost hollow with good camping available on the perimeter of the forest. In drier months running water can still be found at the north-western end of the flat where the creek empties towards Cotter Rocks. Rock Flats is a pristine area and camp fires are discouraged in favour of fuel stoves. Bear the altitude in mind and be prepared for a cool night and a slow start in the morning!

Day two

Two options are available for the return journey—one relatively easy; the second of the other type.

The easier option calls for an easterly course from Rock Flats, down the steep descent to Rendezvous Creek. The creek can then be followed on its western side where the remnants of an old bridle-track come and go. Be prepared for some scrub-bashing and stay

high on the creek's bank, as the creek itself wends through boulders and undergrowth. After some two hours a clearing will be reached (739511 on the *Rendezvous Creek* 1:25 000 map) which is the departure point for the Nursery Creek valley.

For the more adventurous, the aforementioned clearing can be reached along the short ridge which parallels Rendezvous Creek and runs off to the south-east of Rock Flats. After the 1406 metre feature, a spur gradually turns to the east and leads down to the clearing. An examination of the map suggests that this option would provide good views over the park and an easy way of avoiding the undergrowth so typical of creek valleys—as we found to our cost, nothing could be further from the truth!

The northern part of the ridge, up to the southern boundary of Rock Flats, has been burnt in recent times. Consequently, progress is hampered by fallen timber, scrub and regrowth in addition to jumbles of large boulders. There is only a limited view from the few rocks that can be climbed. Nevertheless, this region is a good training-ground for the navigator who wants to determine his or her position accurately under difficult circumstances.

I cannot vouch for the southern part of the ridge as the northern part defeated us after 90 minutes and only 1500 metres of travel. Complete with battered shins, cut arms and dented egos we dropped to Rendezvous Creek for a cool drink and a refreshing dip.

From the clearing on Rendezvous Creek head east to the obvious gap in the range of hills. The climb is steep but progress is helped by the foot pad which runs along the northern side of the small, unnamed creek that rises at the gap. As the gap is neared, the foot pad becomes a prominent track which can be followed down to Nursery Creek. It becomes rather vague around a clearing at the northern end of Nursery Creek, but is prominent once again at the gap to the north-east of the creek (765516 on the *Rendezvous Creek* map). This area is very popular with day walkers, so drinking untreated water from Nursery Creek is inadvisable.

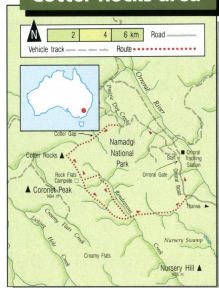
Should time permit, a pleasant side-trip is available down a prepared track on the south-western side of Nursery Creek to Nursery Swamp. This area is a large peat-bog surrounded by low, forested hills, with tranquil, grassy sectors on its western side. Its popularity has a long history. The early settlers used it for lambing—hence its name. For centuries before that, the Aborigines used it for resting and tool making, probably during the summer bogong-moth hunts. These days, walkers of all ages enjoy the area's unusual combination of serenity and ruggedness.

Back to the main walk: from the gap north-east of Nursery Creek, follow the foot track down to the Orroral road. This well-trodden walking route includes a few steep descents but is easy to negotiate. Once on the road, all that remains is the four kilometre trudge back to the car-park. ■

Martin Chalk is an Air Force navigator who first admired the rugged parts of Australia's Great Dividing Range from the cockpit of an F-111 at a height of 500 feet and travelling at 480 knots. These days he takes things more slowly, walking and skiing in the high country.

TRACK NOTES

Cotter Rocks area



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WATER FIT TO DRINK?

Roger Caffin makes some personal observations on water purification

There once was a time when bushwalkers and skiers could drink the water straight from any mountain stream with complete confidence. Today, the only confidence you can have is that doing so may make you sick. There are two major dangers lurking in some of our mountain watercourses: *Escherichia coli*, a bacterium which gives you dysentery and diarrhoea; and *Giardia lamblia*, a protozoan which causes intestinal problems. It is interesting that the latter is proving to be the bigger hazard to walkers and skiers in more developed Australian mountain areas. This article will outline the problems presented by contaminated water and what can be done about them.

Broadly speaking, we can divide the possible contaminants in water into four categories:

- Dissolved but harmless materials such as tannin and salt.
- Suspended matter such as dirt, sticks and granite dust ('floaties').
- Chemicals (for example, solvents and heavy metals).
- Bacteria, viruses, protozoa, nematodes and the like ('bugs').

This division is important because each category presents different problems and needs different treatment. Distinguishing between them is critical to deciding what we need to do with the water we want to drink.

Dissolved materials. This category is relatively harmless if you exclude 'chemicals', which are discussed below. Tannin, or tannic acid, is the stuff which makes the creeks in South-west Tasmania brown (and rots your boots and trousers). Add sugar and milk and you have a substitute for tea (so to speak)! Salt—as found in sea-water or brackish water—is just unpleasant to drink. As far as this article is concerned, they don't matter. Note that you can't mechanically filter these out of water unless you use osmotic filters and very high pressures, or ion-exchange filters.

Suspended matter. Most of us at one time or another have had small bits of stick and algae floating in our drinking-water. Provided it isn't toxic blue-green algae, suspended matter of this sort is of little concern in the high mountains and will also be skipped here. If you are worried about 'floaties', mechanically filtering with your handkerchief works reasonably well (although not with toxic blue-green algae).

Chemicals. This category covers solvents and heavy metals, which are generally found downstream from industrial 'developments'. They can make you very sick in the long term, but normally we wouldn't expect to meet them in the mountains. There are two exceptions to this: downstream from some old mines; and downstream from farming areas. In particular, I have found significant



'Don't drink it all!' (In Loons Cave, Ida Bay, Tasmania.) Andrew Briggs

cloudiness below some apple orchards in the Blue Mountains and would not like to guess what pesticides are in the water there. Mechanical filters (other than osmotic filters) don't work with chemicals although activated carbon filters might work to some degree. They should not necessarily be relied upon.

Bacteria, viruses and protozoa. This category is the focus of this article, and includes both the human *Escherichia coli*, a bacterium which comes from human faecal matter, and the *Giardia lamblia* parasite, which can come from both humans and animals. In general, this category comprises all viruses, bacteria and protozoa, including things like the polio virus, rotavirus, *Herpes simplex*, the cholera bacterium, various bacteria such as those that cause toxic shock, strep throat, scarlet fever, salmonella, legionnaires' disease, and *Cryptosporidium* protozoa. However, for walkers and skiers in Australia the biggest hazards are *E coli* and *G lamblia*, and the latter is, in my opinion, now the most significant. It doesn't matter how clear the water looks: these bugs are too small to see without a good microscope.

E coli: this is a bug (bacterium) which grows in your lower bowels and is relatively harmless as long as it stays there. Typically, its presence or absence is used by local councils and water authorities as a measure of water

quality (that is, whether sewage is getting into the drinking-water). If it gets into your stomach it causes diarrhoea and dysentery. It can only get there by going down your throat: either through drinking contaminated water or as a result of not washing your hands after going to the toilet. Some of our very popular rivers such as Coffs River at Breakfast Creek in New South Wales have a reputation for *E coli*, as many campers have had trouble there. My suspicion would focus on whether the relatively inexperienced campers at such locations ever washed their hands, especially after going to the toilet. On the other hand, anyone who drinks from the creeks below Leura in the Blue Mountains is making a serious mistake, and is likely to have a serious health problem very soon as well—the water here can certainly make you sick.

G lamblia: this is a single-celled organism that has a life cycle which largely takes place in the human gut (intestines). When you drink contaminated water the cyst gets into your upper intestine and hatches out into a flagellated protozoan or trophozoite: a little bug with wavy tentacles. (A microbiologist friend of mine says it looks like a 'mad face'.) This attaches itself to the walls of your intestines and feeds on your blood, causing irritation. The irritated intestine finds it hard to cope with some foods, especially milk and fats, and some of the food ferments *in situ*. You end up feeling bloated, you rumble loudly in public as this gas bubbles around, and you

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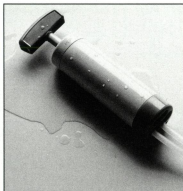
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make very bad smells. Further details are left to the imagination. Each trophozoite splits in two every 12 hours. This may not sound much, but a single trophozoite will turn into a million trophozoites after ten days in your intestine, and a billion after 15 days. Eventually they turn into cysts, egg-shaped things about ten micrometres (μm) wide, which pass out of your body. They can float around in water and that's where the problem of contamination starts.

While most people become painfully aware of the problem within a week of ingesting the cysts, it is not unknown for some people to carry the parasite for months or even longer before realizing that they have a problem. Unfortunately, the cure (typically a dose of Flagyl or metronidazole) is notoriously worse than the problem. Other treatments with lesser side-effects are available but are not always effective.

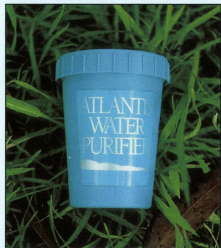
It is important to realize just how serious the problem is. If you are badly infected you could be passing out millions of cysts a day. You can also be infected and passing a small quantity of cysts for some time without showing the normal symptoms¹. The cysts can survive for a fortnight or more in cold water². On the other hand, it has been found that the minimum dose normally capable of infecting you is only about ten cysts³. Two conclusions can be drawn from this: an infected person creates a very serious problem for everyone else when he or she leaves faecal matter on the surface of the soil or in the snow; and it is extremely easy for you to get giardiasis. There has even been an Australian conference on it, and the proceedings⁴ make interesting reading for the technically minded.

Now for the real shock: I have been informed by several competent (professional) sources that the animal populations of both the Blue Mountains and the Snowy Mountains now carry the human *G lamblia* parasite. The native animals have caught it from us. This means that the cysts may be found in any water anywhere in those mountains, and probably in other mountain or bush regions as well. This pattern of infection is not new—the wild animals in many regions in the USA are known to become reinfected each spring as people move into those areas after winter. The Thredbo River and Whites River corridor in the Snowy Mountains—both areas heavily used by walkers and skiers—are notorious for the problem. It might be added, in defence of the animals, that the experience in the USA is that the infection in wild animals tends to die out over the winter (when there are few walkers) and to recur in the spring when the walkers all come back. Humans are the primary source of the problem.

So what is to be done to counter these threats to our enjoyment of the outdoors? The aim of any technique is to provide water which you can drink without getting sick. Looking at the condition of the mountains at present, this means dealing with *E coli* and *G lamblia*. There are three main ways of tackling these bugs: killing them by boiling; removing them by filtration; or inactivating (killing) them with chemicals. In practice, many of the commercial solutions involve a mix of the latter two methods. As mentioned, my experience is that *G lamblia* is the threat of most

concern, and it will be the focus of the rest of this article. But bear in mind that there may always be other problems in some places.

Boiling sounds attractive, and does work—provided you boil the water long enough. Some research literature states that simply bringing the water to the boil is sufficient to kill *E coli* and *G lamblia*. Other people with field experience have said that boiling for a full ten minutes is essential. At



The Atlantis Water Purifier from Questech. Below, the Katadyn Mini Filter.

high altitudes—this applies mainly to climbers and trekkers overseas—the boiling-point for water falls and you have to boil your water even longer. Since many of these regions are 'stoves only', fuel gets to be rather heavy. Boiling litres of water also takes a long time and this ceases to be a viable option for many people.

Filtration has an obvious appeal, but is actually very difficult. Bacteria are very small, and to filter them out of the water mechanically requires microfiltration, down to well under one μm absolute for *E coli*. ('Absolute' means that nothing larger than the quoted value gets through.) Viruses—which can be as small as $0.004 \mu\text{m}$ —require ultrafiltration which is practically impossible in the field. For *G lamblia* the filtration requirements are not as severe as the parasite is 'big'—about ten μm —but it pays to be cautious. Typically, a $0.1\text{--}0.2 \mu\text{m}$ filter is the best available for bushwalkers.

Because the filter holes need to be so small, a fair bit of pressure is required to force the water through them: this pressure requires work—by you. If you want a lot of filtered water and you have only a small unit, the time and effort may be significant. On the other hand, the resulting water does look very clean. In addition, using microfiltration for water which is not completely clear will mean having to clean the filter element frequently. This, in turn, will result in the filter life being shorter than expected. On the lower Nattai River, which is a bit cloudy, I had to clean one filter by scrubbing it every day to keep the force and flow at reasonable levels.

Filter cartridges need to be replaced regularly. Generally you need to replace

a mechanical filter cartridge when you can no longer restore its flow rate by cleaning or when you have abraded the surface significantly. Replacements cost money, but what is your health worth?

A significant problem with filtration is that the filtered water has no defence against subsequent contamination by unfiltered water. (This problem may be lessened when mechanical filtration is combined with the use of a chemical such as iodine—see below.) If you are messy and mix the two, even just a little bit, you could be ruining all your good efforts. Therefore great care is needed to make purely mechanical filtration reliable.

Many viruses are small enough ($0.1 \mu\text{m}$ to $0.004 \mu\text{m}$) to get through commonly available $0.2 \mu\text{m}$ filters. It has been suggested that viruses are often attached to something larger—something acting as a food supply perhaps—or may be actually inside a (larger) cellular organism, and are thus usually stopped by $0.2 \mu\text{m}$ filters. It would seem, however, that they can detach from their associated object and thus pass through a filter under some conditions. Therefore, trusting mechanical filtration alone to remove viruses may be unsafe.

Some filter units offer an optional activated-carbon postfilter which is intended to absorb some metals and chemicals (including iodine) and can improve the taste of the water. My experience of mountain streams suggests that postfiltration is usually unnecessary unless you are using a filter which incorporates an iodine treatment (see below). If I have any doubts about heavy metals, pesticides or the like (such as when downstream from a farm or a town), I get my water elsewhere.

Inactivation can be done by ultraviolet light or by chemicals. Ultraviolet treatment may be realistic for town water-supplies but not for bushwalkers. Chemicals commonly used to treat water include silver, chlorine and iodine. However, it is known that silver does not kill *G lamblia*, which means that commonly available tablets based on this chemical will give no protection against giardiasis. There is





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also a fair bit of doubt about the effectiveness of chlorine against *G. lamblia*, which means that tablets which are based upon the action of this chemical may be unreliable as a defence against this threat as well.

Inactivation of bugs through the use of iodine (in suitable form) works, and it is unlikely that just about any organism could develop a resistance to this. There has to be some concern as to the amount of iodine you take in, but in most cases the amount involved in sterilizing water for occasional short trips does not present a problem. Typically, health authorities authorize or even encourage the addition of iodine to such foods as bread and table salt because most of us do not get enough in our diet. It should be mentioned here, however, that medical warnings are given to pregnant women about monitoring their iodine intake: an excess may be harmful. Also, a few people may be allergic to an excess of iodine. (You would be wise to consult a suitably qualified doctor before using any chemical method for treating water.) The situation changes if you are going on longer or more frequent trips. There does not seem to be any real consensus about the use of iodine for a week or more, although the longer the trip the less desirable it might be. Of more concern to most people seems to be the residual and unpleasantly clinical taste often left by iodine treatment: after several weeks that might begin to pall!

When using iodine to kill bugs you have to pay some attention to the time between putting the iodine in the water and using the water. The inactivation process appears to involve the attachment of an iodine molecule (or several) to the outside of the bug or organism and then the migration of the iodine into the organism, after which the oxidizing strength of the iodine molecule causes it to damage the organic matter. As is the case with any chemical reaction, this takes time. Furthermore, a drop in temperature of 10°C slows any chemical reaction rate by half. Thus, if it takes five minutes for the iodine to be effective in water at 25°C, it will take 20 minutes at 5°C and in water fresh off a snow bank (at about 0°C) it will take 30 minutes. As a result, when using iodine it is wise to use two water-bottles: 'drink now' (treated some time ago) and 'drink later' (just treated). When using filters which include an iodine resin to supplement the mechanical filtration process, there may be negligible delay between treatment and drinking. It seems that in these cases the iodine stays attached to the bugs—this has been tested in laboratory trials—and continues killing them as they slide down your throat! The water will also warm up inside you, causing the iodine reaction to accelerate.

The accompanying product survey is intended to present a reasonably thorough, subjective overview of the types of water-treatment products available for use with rucksack sports. My opinions are my own: feel free to disagree, but please take the risk of water-contamination seriously. If in doubt, ask your friends whether they have had giardiasis.

My wife and I carry our own water from our own rain-water tank on day trips and drink only that. We carry a bottle of the (ultra-light-

weight) iodine pills in my pack at all times, and sometimes rely on them. We would not rely on any of the chlorine-based or silver-based treatments.

I would be reluctant to recommend any one purifier in particular: each has its merits and its problems. However, for someone who cannot justify the relatively high cost (or weight) of a mechanical device, I would recommend iodine tablets.



The Scout water purifier from Pür.

One serious problem shared by all the mechanical units is that of freezing. During winter ski touring the water in the inlet and outlet tubes and valves can freeze—in as little as ten minutes as I discovered on one cold night!

If I were going overseas on a long trip I would certainly take a filter of some sort. If I had to provide water for a large group of people I would either carry one of the larger models not mentioned here or get someone else to do the pumping!

The following comments are generally the opinions of the author: I am sure the various vendors may disagree. The major exception to this are the lifetimes quoted for filters: these are manufacturers' figures. Prices quoted are roughly the retail prices as of the middle of 1994.

Filters

Katadyn, Switzerland

There are two models of interest to walkers in the Katadyn range: the Pocket Filter and the Mini Filter. Both use a patented 0.2 µm ceramic filter impregnated with silver and developed more than 50 years ago. The Pocket Filter sells for around \$420, weighs approximately 650 grams and lasts for up to 50 000 litres of water. The Mini Filter sells for around \$220 and weighs about 250 grams and has a maximum filter life of 7000 litres. The ceramic filter in each unit can be replaced at the end of its life, which will be shortened if it is continually called upon to treat murky or dirty water. The filter in the Pocket Filter is about twice the size of the one in the Mini Filter. Each also has a coarse wire mesh prefilter on the inlet tube. The silver is present to prevent any bacterial growth in the ceramic; it is not effective

against protozoa such as *G. lamblia*. The filter is, however, definitely fine enough to stop both *G. lamblia* and *E. coli*, and the silver will also inhibit the *E. coli* from multiplying. To use this unit is very simple: basically, you pump water through the ceramic filter into your water-bottle.

The ceramic filter can clog up fairly easily in the field, as might be expected for such a fine filter. However, cleaning brushes come with both units and are fairly easy to use. The brush actually abrades the surface of the ceramic, so the unit's lifetime will depend on how much dirt is in the water you put through it. If it wasn't too dirty, I found that I could temporarily clean the ceramic by brushing it down with some toilet-paper. This would last for one or two cycles before I needed to scrub it with the brush. Despite some suggestions I have read, cleaning does not risk contamination of the output side of the filter: it is sealed. However, do be very careful when cleaning any filter: that's where all the *G. lamblia* bugs have collected! You will be getting them, concentrated, on your hands. Careful washing afterwards is essential. I found that scrubbing the ceramic while my wife poured river water over the lot was very effective. The last rinse was done with filtered water, after which I pumped a couple of litres through the filter on to the ground to flush the insides.

I used a Pocket Filter on several trips, and found that it requires a fair amount of force when pumping. It is also rather slow—about two minutes a litre if you take it reasonably. I was almost able to get up to the quoted one minute a litre when it was very clean, but that was tiring: not the best thing for the end of a hard day.

The Mini Filter also requires a fair bit of force to use. Being roughly half the size, it works about half as fast as the Pocket Filter. The pump is entirely plastic—rather than metal as in the Pocket Filter unit—and I was a bit concerned that under rough field use I might break it. As a result I did not take it on any trips. It would be quite strong enough for tourist/hotel use, for which it is really intended.

Both units have a very short output nozzle, which makes them awkward to use. The purpose of the short nozzle is to provide an absolute minimum area on which any contamination could grow. Despite the warnings, I stuck a short bit of silicone tubing on the output nozzle and into my water-bottle when in use, and carefully took it off straight afterwards. This made the unit much easier to use. I also flushed the whole unit with a couple of strokes each time. This modification was entirely at my own risk.

Packing the Pocket Filter away involved winding the inlet tube round the body of the filter and putting it in the supplied cover. I had to be particularly careful that the inlet filter didn't drip into the outlet spout when doing so. In practice, I always flushed the unit with a few strokes before starting to collect filtered water.

Waterworks, MSR, USA

The Waterworks weighs around 540 grams and comes with either a ceramic cartridge (about \$260) or a carbon cartridge (about \$230). The difference is that the ceramic cartridge will survive more cleanings than the carbon one, filtering about 300 litres of clean water (as opposed to 100 litres for the carbon cartridge). It does, however, filter about one-third more slowly. There is also a final 0.1 µm absolute membrane filter. I am told that everyone seems to be going for the newer ceramic element as it lasts longer, protects the membrane filter better, and is easier to clean. Replacement costs are approximately \$50 for the carbon cartridge, \$65 for the ceramic cartridge, and \$80 for the membrane filter. Fortunately, the membrane filter lasts for several ceramic cartridge lifetimes. The purification process is straight microfiltration like the Katadyn Pocket Filter. It contains no iodine, but has three levels of filtration: inlet sponge, ceramic, and membrane.

The body of the filter has a lever which protrudes from the side and drives a small piston. The force required to pump this filter is therefore fairly small but the volume pumped with each stroke is also much smaller. The reason for this is the 0.1 µm filter, which is even finer than the Pocket Filter and

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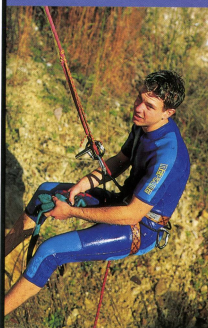
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therefore requires higher pressure. The filter is, however, fairly easy to hold—even easier than the Pür Scout. (see below).

The filter has an inlet hose which incorporates the primary foam filter and a little float. The float keeps the inlet off the bottom of the creek or water-bucket, and out of any silt. This is a very smart move: silt will quickly clog the filter and usually contains any bugs that are around at concentrations thousands of times higher than in the water. The unit comes with a long outlet hose, or the bottom of the filter can be screwed to an MSR Dromedary water-bag.

I used a Waterworks with a ceramic cartridge for five days and found it very easy to use, albeit a bit slower than the Pocket Filter. It's no use pumping faster: there is an internal overpressure release valve! Opening it up and cleaning it turned out to be very easy: you just unscrew it and lightly scrub the ceramic cartridge with the (supplied) Scotchbrite pad. Don't try to clean the membrane filter: that's a bit more delicate.

Purifiers

Bottle 5-Stage, AccuFilter International, USA

This comes in two forms, each selling for roughly \$60: the first is in the form of a one litre bottle just like a racing cyclist's bottle; and the second looks like a (US military) plastic canister. Contained within the filter insert inside the bottle are five stages of filtration: physical, penta-iodine (I₂) resin, physical, carbon, and physical. The resin appears to be the same as is used in the Questech units (see below). The filter in the bottle lasts for about 150 litres, and is replaceable for around \$44. The whole thing comes with the filter in a separate bubble cap: you uncup the filter and stick it into the cap inside the bottle. The weight of the bottle is probably less than that of your current water-bottle: a significant factor for many.

A word of warning is appropriate here: a Bottle 3-Stage is also available (at a lower price), but the 3-Stage products do not have the iodine resin and will not kill any bugs at all!

Testing this filter was an interesting experience. By pulling the nozzle up you can suck from the bottle quite easily (there is no micron-level microfiltration stage). Alternatively, you can try to squeeze the upright bottle and get water into a cup: it's no use tipping it upside down as that puts air at the filter entrance at the bottom of the bottle! It is important to note that the unit is meant for use as a drink-bottle only: for cooking the company recommends the use of its iodine tablets (see below). Fortunately, the nozzle can be closed (pushed down) so that you can put the bottle into your pack, but I am not sure what pressure the whole thing would take! Not much, I suspect, although it didn't leak when I squeezed it to fill a cup.

After getting some carbon dust in the first half-litre of water (as anticipated in the instructions) the water came out clear and fairly taste-free—at least in the early stages. When the water starts to taste strongly of iodine the carbon filter has become saturated and it's time to get a new insert. It would be useful to keep track of how many litres you had put through it.

It was interesting to compare this filter with the Atlantis cup (see below): both use the same resin and carbon, but the AccuFilter bottle has much better flow, albeit with a significantly shorter filter life. I was told that the absence of a proper µm-level filter may be remedied fairly soon.

Despite being unusual, this approach seems like a cheap and effective solution. The obvious question is this: if you are carrying tablets to purify your cooking-water (as recommended by the manufacturer), why not use them for your drinking-water as well? The answer would seem to be that the bottle appears to give a cleaner taste while still providing a very effective treatment. Whether that justifies the cost difference is another matter.

Filter straws, AccuFilter International, USA

This is a fat straw containing a physical prefilter, an iodine resin filter and a carbon postfilter and is used exactly like a normal drinking straw. Obviously it is of little use in filling your belly (unless no one is watching). We did not test the AccuFilter Straws, but by analogy with the AccuFilter Bottle they would probably work moderately well (unless you had hiccups).

Pür, USA

There are three units in this range: at a weight of roughly 340 grams and costing about \$150, the middle one (Scout) would be most appropriate for walkers. This unit has a foam plastic prefilter, a one µm mechanical filter and a tri-iodine (I₂—Tri-iodide) resin filter. The tri-iodine cartridge lasts for about 750 litres of clean water. There is an optional carbon postfilter. Very conveniently, the Scout has both a long inlet tube and a reasonable outlet tube, with a little nozzle on the end which hooks on to your water-bottle or belly. As with the MSR Waterworks, the unit's inlet hose incorporates a float. Note that this unit is effective against all viruses as well. I found the Scout quite easy and fast to pump, although the way the inlet and outlet tubes come from the bottom of the unit prevents you from putting the base on the ground. On the other hand, provided I cleaned it every few days, I could hold it in both hands fairly easily, so that didn't really matter.

Cleaning the Scout requires you to open it up and brush the filter surface, in the same way as with the Katadyn Pocket Filter. The manufacturer recommends using a soft toothbrush (but not the one you use on your teeth). Be warned though: too much force on the soft, plastic filter and you can abrade the surface and eventually you will make a hole straight through. I found that very light brushing with some toilet-paper was generally quite sufficient, especially if done every day after use. The disassembly and reassembly after cleaning required just a fraction more care than with the Pocket Filter. Once you have done it a couple of times, there is no problem as long as you don't lose the critical 'O'-ring (which caution is clearly mentioned in the instructions).

You need to run about ten litres of water through the filter at the start to get rid of any excess iodine or carbon dust, something about which the manual is quite explicit.

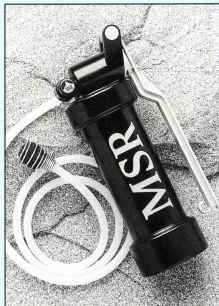
Packing the Scout away requires either some care or to squash the tubes coming off the fittings at the end, or removing the tubes each time and replacing the caps. The latter seems reasonable, but it would be essential to make sure that you don't let the inlet tube contaminate the outlet tube: I packed the two tubes in separate plastic bags. The filtered water does contain a very small amount of residual iodine but I certainly wouldn't rely on that to get rid of any contamination. You also have to make absolutely sure that you put the tubes back on the right way around the next time you use the filter.

Atlantis Water Purifier, Questech, USA

This unit has no mechanical filter, just a penta-iodine resin filter at the bottom of a cup, an (optional) carbon postfilter under it and some other chemicals for taste. It costs about \$69 including the carbon postfilter and weighs around 100 grams. It is very simple to use: you just sit it on your water-bottle and pour water through it—no pumping at all. The developers claim that the penta-iodine resin is significantly more potent than the tri-iodine resin, while releasing very little free iodine into the water³. (Mind you, if the water is full of bugs there will be some iodine attached to them, and they don't get filtered out with this unit.)

The major problem with this unit is the speed of filtration. The iodine filter by itself is a bit slow as it is not pressurized, but adding the carbon postfilter halves the flow rate again. From experience I think that the carbon postfilter is essential, otherwise there is a strong iodine taste. We tried it without the carbon filter—once only! With the carbon postfilter attached

it filters at about the same speed as the MSR Waterworks, or perhaps a bit more slowly. The problem is that to get this speed you have to keep pouring water into the top cup without allowing any to overflow past the filter and into your bottle (which ruins everything). The concentration required to do this at the end of a hard day is a bit much. My hope would be that one day Questech will come out with



The MSR Waterworks water filter.

a small pump version of this filter, with maybe a two-five µm mechanical prefilter to remove larger organic matter and with a slightly larger carbon filter.

Tablets and drops

Iodine tablets, AccuFilter International, USA and Coghlan's, Canada

As far as I can see, both the Coghlan's tablets and the Potable Aqua tablets by AccuFilter are the same: they appear to be the same chemical, size, weight and colour, and come in identical bottles (except for the paper labels).

These tablets each contain about 20 milligrams of tetraglycine hydroperoxide, which is an iodine-release agent. There are 50 in a bottle which sells for less than \$10. According to the directions, they are recommended for 'emergency disinfection' and not for continuous use. The recommended dose is one tablet for a litre of water, and wait ten minutes unless the water is very cold (in that case wait 20 minutes). The Potable Aqua instructions suggest two tablets a litre if the water is very cold or if *G. lamblia* is known to be present. Obviously, one tablet leaves some iodine in the water and this does leave a very

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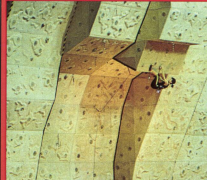
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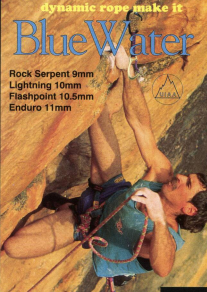
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WILD GEAR SURVEY

faint clinical iodine taste. Two tablets would presumably be 'tastier'. However, I was able to drink the water without any trouble for several days, and would be happy to do so on other trips.

Tablets such as these would be the best option if you are after the lightest possible weight and don't want to spend time filtering water, or if you don't go walking very often and don't want to spend the hundreds of dollars needed for a filter. All you need is two water-bottles: 'drink now' and 'drink later'.

My recommendation would be to carry some in your first aid kit. However, be warned that the tablets do not last for ever: they absorb water and begin to decompose once the sealed bottle is opened. When they stop looking dry and powdery and start to go glassy, get a new bottle of tablets! Keeping them in a couple of good airtight bottles with some silica-gel desiccant works well, if you know how to keep the desiccant functional.

Puritabs, Essex Laboratories, UK

These contain 17 milligrams of sodium dichloroisocyanurate, which is basically a chlorination agent. Given a sufficiently high concentration and a fair bit of time they might be effective against *G lamblia*.

Micropur MT1, Katadyn, Switzerland

These are based on silver, which is an effective means of treating water for such things as typhoid and cholera (which are making a resurgence in some parts of the world). They are not, however, effective against *G lamblia* and should not be relied upon as a defence against giardiasis. For this reason I would classify them as insufficient for ensuring healthy water in our mountains.

Tincture of iodine

This is the really cheap way of doing it. You take tincture of iodine, which can be purchased at your local pharmacist, and use several drops a litre (depending on the size of the drops and the dilution of the tincture), with a five-ten minute wait. The trouble is that the iodine is in its least effective form, so you get the maximum dose and taste. There is also some question whether this form of iodine will work very effectively on *G lamblia*, or under very cold conditions. Given that there are fairly cheap alternatives, I would have doubts about using this method. I did not try it. It is interesting that some trekking agencies in Nepal still use such iodine drops, after boiling the water for ten minutes. ■

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Roger Caffin, a CSIRO research scientist in wool technology for 25 years, has been bushwalking since he was a Scout. At present he lives in Sydney and spends his spare time walking in the Blue Mountains and crossing the Australian Alps on foot and by ski.

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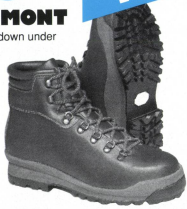
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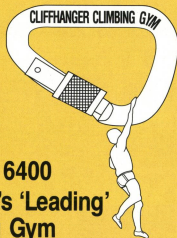
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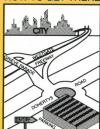
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ROCKCLIMBING GYMS

They're the latest thing in the city—a *Wild* survey

Climbing gyms have their origin in basement bouldering cellars and backyard brick-and-glue training walls. An old tradition in the wetter parts (which means all) of the UK, such amenities provide the perfect solution to the alarming loss of form and fitness experienced by dedicated climbers over the long winter months of inactivity.

The modern climbing gym, however, is more than just a place to sit out the winter blues: it has become a genuine *alternative* to climbing in the wilds. For some, the lure of a round-the-clock, dry, conveniently located 'cliff'—complete with kiosk, gear shop and plenty of awed spectators—is climbing heaven. Climbing gyms certainly provide a handy place to train or learn some of the basics of the craft, and are rapidly replacing traditional 'day-trip' crags as the location of many beginners' first taste of climbing.

Most gyms will supply the essential gear you require to use the walls; ropes are almost always in place but usually a fee is payable for harnesses, belay devices and chalk-bags. While sand-shoes are the normal attire for beginners, some gyms will hire out climbing boots.

Newcomers may want some instruction and most gyms will get you started free of charge. Particular attention should be paid to belaying; while the almost fail-safe Gri-gri belay device can be found in some gyms, most have more traditional equipment that requires some knowledge and practice to use properly. Ensure that you tie on to the rope with the same bombproof knots as are used in 'real' climbing. If the knots are already tied, make sure that you check them and clip them to your harness securely (with your screw-gate done up). Be certain that you have the harness on correctly. Further instruction—on technique, for example—can often be provided for a charge. (Another matter requiring great attention is warming up and warming down to reduce the risk of injury.)

The Climbing Wall Industry Group, a US organization of climbing-wall operators, recently asserted that only dynamic ropes, rather than the more frequently used, longer lasting static ropes, should be employed on climbing walls. While no injuries resulting from the use of static ropes—which may produce a greater shock force than dynamic ropes on both climber and wall in the event of a fall—have been reported, this finding should be borne in mind.

The range of holds that can be bolted to plywood or fibreglass walls is now enormous: look for variety in shape and size and for imaginative placement. If every hold is a tiny

Dave Jones, the second Australian to climb Punks in the Gym (grade 32), Mt Arapiles, Victoria (see *Wild* no 53), doing the 'gym thing'. Glenn Tempest



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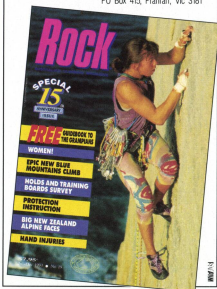
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Wild Equipment Survey Rockclimbing gyms

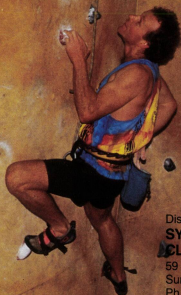
	Hours	Cost (casual)	Cost (membership)	Facilities
ANU Gym ANU Sports Union, Canberra, ACT 2601. Ph (06) 249 2890	Weekdays: 7 am-10 pm, weekends: 9 am-3 pm	\$2.00 (student), \$5.00 (non-member)	\$40/year (student), \$60/year (sports union members), \$120/year (non-members)	L, P, S, W
Blue Mountains Climbing Cellar Mountain Designs, 190 Katoomba St, Katoomba, NSW 2750. Ph (047) 82 5999	Daily: 9 am-5:30 pm (Thur: 9 am-7:30 pm)	\$5.00	\$150/year	I
Canberra City YMCA London Cir, Civic, ACT 2601. Ph (06) 249 8733	Weekdays: 9 am-9 pm, Sat: 9 am-6 pm, Sun: 9:30 am-4 pm	\$4.00	\$80/three months	C, I, P, R
Central Australia YMCA Saddaden Rd, Alice Springs, NT 0870. Ph (089) 52 5666	Weekdays: 6 am-9 pm, weekends: 8:30 am-6 pm	\$8.00/two hours, \$6.00/two hours (concession)	\$250/year (\$222 concession)	L, L, P, R, S, W
City Crag Mountain Designs, 499 Kent St, Sydney, NSW 2000. Ph (02) 267 3822	Weekdays: 9 am-9 pm, Sat: 9 am-6 pm, Sun: 10 am-5 pm	\$12.00	\$650/year	C, I, K (health food), R, S
Climbanger Climbing Gym Westgate Sport & Leisure Complex, Cnr Grove Pde & Doherty Rd, Altona North, Vic 3025. Ph (03) 369 5400	Weekdays: 12 noon-10 pm, weekends: 9 am-6 pm	\$7.00 (adult), \$5.00 (concession)	\$395/year (\$295 concession)	A, I, K, L, P, S
Grafton Climbing Wall South Grafton Pool & Gym Complex, 77 Cambridge St, South Grafton, NSW 2461. Ph (066) 42 3238	Weekdays: 6 am-8 pm, weekends: 10 am-6 pm	\$2.00	\$120/year (480 concessions) Shorter periods available	K, P, S, T, W, BBQ facilities, pool, jpa
Launceston College Climbing Gym Stables St, Launceston, Tas 7250. c/o Algonquias Pty Ltd, 71 York St, Launceston, Tas 7250. Ph (003) 31 9644	Weekdays: 4 pm-10 pm, weekends: closed	\$2.50, \$1.50 (student)	na	P, S
Lismore's Fit for All 81 Union St, Lismore, NSW 2480. Ph (066) 21 8689	Weekdays: 6 am-9 pm, Sat: 9 am-6 pm, Sun: 9 am-7 pm	\$8.00	\$70/ten visits, \$130/20 visits, \$240/40 visits	S, W, child-minding
Mountain Designs (Perth) 802 Hay St, Perth, WA 6000. Ph (08) 322 4774	Mon-Wed: 8:30 am-5:30 pm, Thur-Fri: 8:30 am-9 pm, Sat: 8:30 am-4 pm, Sun: closed	\$3.00	\$100/year	R, W, library
Rock Gym 9 Adair Ave (in Police Citizen's Youth Club) Rockdale, NSW 2216. Ph (02) 567 7831	Weekdays: 6 am-10 pm (6 am-10 am book ahead), weekends: 10 am-6 pm	\$6.00 (6 am-10 am), \$8.00 (10 am-6 pm), \$10.00 (5 pm-10 pm)	\$380/year	L, P, S, drinks
Rockstarum Sunnybank Hills Fitness Centre, Shop 5, Level 4, Sunnybank Hills Shopping Town, Cnr Compton & Calum Rds, Sunnybank Hills, Qld 4109. Ph (07) 272 0148	Mon-Wed: 6 am-9:30 pm, Thur-Fri: 8 am-9 pm, Sat: 8 am-5 pm, Sun: 10 am-12 noon, 4 pm-7 pm	\$8.00	\$295/year	K, L, P, S, W, sauna, solarium
Rockclips, The Factory 224 Barry Pde, Fortitude Valley, Qld 4006. Ph (07) 216 0452	Daily: 9:30 am-9:30 pm	\$9.00/three hours	\$540/year	L, K, L, S, V, W, pool tables
Rockworks Factory 1, 74 Lipton Dve, Thomastown, Vic 3074. Ph (03) 482 4054	Weekdays: 10 am-10 pm, weekends: 12 noon-9 pm	\$8.00	\$270/year	K, P
Sydney Indoor Climbing Gym 58 Liverpool Rd, Summer Hill, NSW 2150. Ph (02) 716 6949	Weekdays: 10 am-9 pm, weekends: 10 am-6 pm	\$8.00/four hours, \$8.50/four hours (concession)	\$200/year, then \$3.00/visit	L, L, P, R, S, W
The Climbing Centre Unit 3, 18 Bosc Rd, Penrith, NSW 2750. Ph (047) 31 1130	Weekdays: 10 am-10 pm, weekends: 9 am-8 pm	\$8.00/four hours	\$500/year	K, P, S (women's only), free BBQ facilities
The Edge Indoor Climbing Centre Unit 10, 5 Salisbury Rd, Castle Hill, NSW 2154. Ph (02) 899 6235	Weekdays: 10 am-10 pm, weekends: 10 am-6 pm	\$8.00, \$7.00 (concession)	\$300/year (\$220 concession)	A, C, K, P, S, V
The Hardrock Climbing Company Pty Ltd Unit 2, 15 Warran Crt, Nunawading, Vic 3131. Ph (03) 894 4183	Weekdays: 10 am-10 pm, weekends: 12 noon-10 pm	\$8.00	\$300/year	C, P, R, V
The Rocknessum Unit 2, 45 Captain Cook Dve, Geelong, NSW 2225. Ph (02) 524 3944	Daily: 9 am-10 pm	\$10.00 \$8.00 (children)	\$500/year	L, P, S
University of Tasmania Sport and Recreation Centre, Hobart, Tas 7000. Ph (003) 20 0084	Mon-Thu: 8 am-11 pm, Fri: 8 am-9 pm, weekends: 10 am-8 pm	\$3.00	na	L, P, S
The Victorian Climbing Centre 12 Highbury Dve, Seaford, Vic 3198. Ph (03) 782 4222	Weekdays: 10 am-10 pm, weekends: 12 noon-6 pm, winter Saturdays: noon-10 pm	\$7.00, \$5.00 (concession), (including gear hire \$12.00, \$9.00 (concession))	\$280/year (\$230 concession)	K, P, T
YMCA Rockclimbing Club 73 Yarra St, Geelong, Vic 3220. Ph (052) 21 5344	Mon: 10 am-5 pm, Tue-Thu: 2 pm-5 pm, Fri: 10 am-4 pm, Sat: 1 pm-4 pm, Sun: 10 am-4 pm	\$6.00	\$30/year, then \$4.00 (\$2.00 club regn)	L, S

A amenities C change rooms I instruction K kiosk L lockers na not available P parking R refreshments S showers T toilets V viewing area W weights

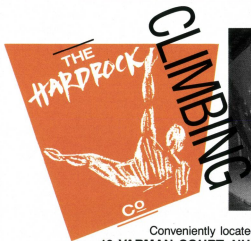
EQUIPMENT

climbing area name	Number of climbs at grades a) 1-12, b) 13-19, c) 20+	Number of climbs: top-rope, lead	Height: maximum average (metres)	Frequency of route changes	Equipment for hire	Equipment for sale	Public transport	Meeting audio-visual facilities	Wall type	Comments
9 (new 8), 119 (old wall)	a) 6, b) 8, c) 7	12: na (new wall); 9: na (old wall)	12.0, 10.0	Every six-eight weeks	Rope and harness (\$2.00)	None	Five minutes from Canberra city	Both available	AME panels (new wall), brick (old wall)	There are two climbing walls. \$4.00 charge for old wall to non-members. Affiliated with ANU Mountaineering Club
8	Quite hard, steep	na, na	6.0, 4.5	Monthly	Boots (\$3.00)	Full gear shop above	Train 200 m	TV, video	Plywood	Bouldering only
6	a) 3, b) 7, c) 4	14, 5	7.0, 7.0	Every three-four months	Harness, karabiner, Sicht plate: \$1.00/person	None	Bus 500 m	Meeting room	Brick and plywood	
0	a) 7, b) 4, c) 3	14, 3	9.2, 8.0	Approximately every six weeks	Harness (included in entry fee)	Chalk-bags, chalk, Lycra	Bus outside	Both available	Plywood	Bouldering wall, two abseil stations
0	a) 20%, b) 40%, c) 40%	45-50, 12-19	17.0, 11.0	Some weekly, all monthly	Harness (\$5.00), boots (\$5.00)	Full gear shop attached	Train/bus outside	TV, video	T-wall textured plywood panels	Dynamic ropes only
0	a) 17, b) 34, c) 35	43, 5	20.0, 13.0	Short: every two-three weeks, long: every four-six weeks	Harness (\$7.00), karabiner (\$2.00), boots (\$5.00), chalk-bag and chalk-bag (\$2.00)	Full range of climbing equipment	Bus outside	Both available	Textured timber, AME and Emre-Prises panels	Other facilities (pool, spa, weights, etc) in complex. Wide range of features, including cracks, aretes. Groupbook discounts. Soon to extend.
0	b) 6+, c) 6	12, na	4.8, 4.8	Fortnightly	Rope, harness, karabiner, belay device (\$1.00/person)	None	Train 1.5 km	None	Brick and formed plywood	Maximum of three climbers simultaneously. 11 m bouldering wall. Affiliated with Northern Rivers Bushwalkers Club
0	a) 1, b) 7, c) 3	8, 7	8.0, 8.0	Every two-three months	None	None	Bus outside	None	Concrete	Two crack-climbs. Access arranged through Alpines Bush H/L, St Johns St, Launceston
0	a) 1, b) 4, c) 1	6, na	8.0, 8.0	Fortnightly	Harness (\$5.00)	None	Train, bus 'close'	Both available	Plywood	
0	c) 2	na, 2	4.0, 3.0	Monthly	Boots (\$2.00)	Full gear shop below	Train, bus 'close'	Both available	Plywood	Bouldering, roof traverse
0	a) 25%, b) 30%, c) 45%	38, 2	8.0, 7.0	'Frequently'	Harness (\$5.00), boots (\$5.00), chalk (\$8.50)	Harnesses, ropes, boots and other software	Train 'close'	Conference room, TV, video	Textured plywood	Any route can be led; two set up for leading at any one time
0	Varies	9, 2+	12.5, 8.0	Every two-four weeks (whole wall)	Harness (\$3.00), karabiner (\$2.00), Sicht plate (\$2.00), The lot (\$4.00)	None	Bus 'close'	TV, video	Plywood	Bouldering wall. Groups encouraged
0	a) 15, b) 25, c) 15	55, 55	12.0, 8.0	Monthly	Harness (\$3.00), boots (\$4.00)	Full gear shop attached	Bus 100 m, train 250 m	Both available	Textured plywood	Membership includes retail outlet discounts. 100 m bouldering traverse. Soon to extend
0	a) 7, b) 12, c) 9	24, 7	7.2, 6.5	Daily	Harness (\$4.00), boots (\$3.00), chalk-bag (\$3.00)	Ropes, boots, rope bags, tape, cord, some hardware	Bus 300 m	TV, video	Wooden panels	Affiliated with RMT (Bundarra)
7	a) 10, b) 10, c) 15	35, na	12.6, 7.5	Fortnightly	Harness (\$4.00), boots (\$5.00), chalk-bag (\$3.00)	Full range of climbing equipment, clothing, books	Bus outside, train 'close'	TV, video, slides on application	Retrox textured plywood	Seminars, Bouldering
5	a) 36, b) 38, c) 30	98, 6	12.0, 8.0	Daily	Harness (\$3.00), boots (\$5.00), chalk-bag (\$2.00)	Full range of climbing equipment	Train and bus 'close'	TV, video	Textured plywood	Bouldering wall. Finger boards
0	a) 2, b) 17, c) 15	30, 4	15.0, 8.0	Every three weeks	Harness (\$4.00), chalk-bag (\$2.00)	Full range of climbing equipment	Bus 'close'	Air-conditioned room with large-screen TV, video	Plywood and textured panels	Adjustable crack-climb
0	a) 15, b) 15, c) 14	38, 6	12.0, 8.0	Fortnightly	Harness, karabiner, Sicht plate (\$4.00 all three), boots (\$5.00)	Ropes, harness, karabiners, chalk-bags and chalk, range of hardware	Train, bus five minutes	Coffee lounge, TV, video	Textured panels	Bouldering wall, overhangs
0	a) 15, b) 40, c) 15	70, 4	8.0, 7.0	'Frequently'	Harness (\$3.00), karabiner (\$1.00), boots (\$5.00), chalk-bag (\$1.50)	Full range of climbing equipment, clothing	Train 'close'	Both available	Brick, concrete slabs and textured plywood	
0	b) 4, c) 6	10, na	7.0, 7.0	Monthly	To TUCC members only	na	Bus 200 m	Both available	Plywood	Members of the public must be placed on Tasmanian University Climbing Club tickets
0	a) 12, b) 20, c) 14	46, 7	8.0, 6.5	Two routes changed daily	Boots (\$3.00), chalk-bag (\$2.00)	Harnesses, boots, hardware and software, guidebooks	Bus outside, train 700 m	Both available	Timber panel	Affiliated with Bayside Climbing Club
0	a) 5, b) 6, c) 4	10, 1	9.0, 7.0	Every eight weeks	Harness (included in entry fee)	None	Bus 'close'	On request	Plywood	Affiliated with Geelong YMCA

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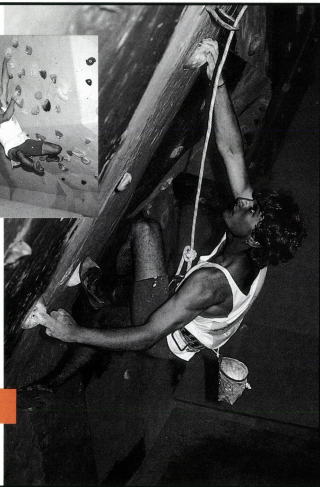
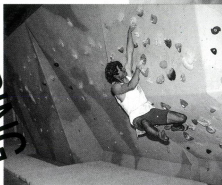
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edge that must be crimped, expect sore tendons at the end of the day. A good hold cannot necessarily be pinched, and requires you to use the features moulded into it. Routes that are well set demand some thought—not just a long reach. The tendency of wall designers to make hard routes by attaching lines of huge buckets to ridiculously overhanging walls may suit some muscle-bound weight-pumpers but has little to do with encouraging technique or even with providing enjoyment.

Moulded wall panels, such as those made by Entre-Prises or AME, are designed to simulate such features as tiny edges, bulges and slopes, but can still be boring if the routes have been poorly set. Most plywood walls are given a coat of textured paint to simulate a rough rock surface; such walls provide much more realistic 'stickiness' for smeared feet but come at the cost of quite rapid wear on boots; and the rougher surfaces can lead to grazed knuckles, elbows and knees.

The number and variety of routes, and the frequency with which they are changed, will govern how many visits you can expect before you can do every route one-handed with your eyes closed. Lately, the more popular gyms are becoming so crowded on busy nights that there might be a wait of up to 20 minutes before a rope becomes available. If the popularity of climbing gyms continues to increase, some 'rock' climbers just may be forced to return to the wilds and put up with the inconvenience of climbing rock.

David Burnett

TRIX

Drying socks the cosy way Steven Robinson

Wet socks? Camped where you can't light a fire to dry them, such as snow-camping above the tree-line?

One unpleasant way to dry them is to wear them to bed—most undesirable.

All is not lost, however. If you can spare sufficient stove fuel to boil some water, and have one (or, better still, two) water-bottles that will stand hot water (for example, Sigg bottles), take heart:

- fill your water-bottle/s with boiling water
- push it/them down as far into your wrung-out sock/s as possible
- lay it/them on something that won't be harmed by the high temperature
- watch the water-vapour pour out of your sock/s!

Heavy woolen socks might need the water reheated a bit before they dry fully. Just pour it back into the billy and bring it to the boil again.

Once you're done, you can use the water to make a cuppa (it's still clean!), or try this one for size: a water-bottle full of hot water stuffed inside a thick, dry sock is a great hot-water bottle for those who have trouble getting their feet warm when they climb into their cold sleeping-bags at night! ■

Wild welcomes readers' contributions to this section; payment is at our standard rate. Send to the address at the end of this department.

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

Quick march

Danner boots are made in the USA, and have been available in Australia since late 1993. Danner's range includes walking boots, as well as boots for a host of other weird and wonderful uses. The *Fort Lewis* utilizes leather, Cambrelle and Gore-Tex lining, Thinsulate insulation, a cushioned insole and a Vibram sole. The *Acadia* is made of leather, Cordura, Gore-Tex, Cambrelle lining, Thinsulate insulation, a cushioned insole and Vibram sole. Both boots are of a high cut and sell for \$389 and \$350, respectively. The *Hood Winter LT* is also a high-cut boot, uses similar materials to the Fort Lewis and costs \$369. The *Danner Light* is constructed of similar materials to the *Acadia* but it is cut to a lower, 'traditional' boot height; RRP \$305. The *Colorado* looks more like a bushwalkers' boot than the others mentioned, and comprises Dri-lex lining, suede leather, Cordura and a



The Danner Colorado walking boot—good for crossing grand canyons? **Right**, the Wilderness Equipment Wild Child rucksack. (Keep looking out for the adult version...)

cushioned insole. RRP \$239. *Fergus Lindsay* (phone [02] 369 2752) is the Australian agent for Danner and at present only four shops stock Danner boots.

If American boots can be called Colorado and Fort Lewis, why not call an Australian boot *Bourke*? This is just what Australian boot manufacturer Rossi has done with its latest boot, which features a moulded sole, leather upper, Cambrelle lining, padded ankle area and a reinforced heel. These lightweight boots are available in sizes 4–12 and sell for around \$139. This latest offering from a long-established manufacturer is already proving to be very popular with walkers.

RUCKSACKS

Untamed infants

Outdoor Survival, distributor of *Tatanka day packs*, has sent us two of the latest models for review. The *Vento* is a top-loading 25 litre pack made from Trylon, a waterproof and abrasion-resistant fabric. It features pockets on the front and lid, and a mesh pocket and compression-straps on each side. The harness secures with a padded waist-belt and chest-strap. RRP \$98.

The *Cycle Bag* is a smaller day pack than the *Vento* and uses a tear-drop loading style.

Inside the pack is an elasticized pocket and on the front is a half-size zip pocket. It has a small mesh pocket on each side, a padded back and a non-padded waist-strap and chest-strap. RRP \$76.

With the *Wild Child*, a recent addition to the range of rucksacks from Australian manufacturer *Wilderness Equipment*, the young child or baby is simply placed in the 'seat' of the pack and is secured in place with a restraining strap and harness. The mesh seat on which the child sits can also be adjusted in height (relative to the pack) to accommodate children of different heights (but, no, it won't carry a 180 centimetre 'baby' with blisters and a bad attitude). At about the same dimensions as a conventional rucksack (and using a conventional harness system for the wearer), this canvas pack weighs about 2.2 kilograms when empty and also includes a mesh touch-tape pocket on the back (behind the child). There is a day-pack size zip pocket at the base of the pack, and compression-straps are on the side. RRP \$265.

MISCELLANEOUS

Potting-mix

The number of brands and styles of stainless steel *billies* you see in outdoor shops is on the increase. Among these are saucepans in five sizes from *Olicamp*. The *Kettle Set* contains a saucepan and a lid (which doubles as a frying-pan). The lid has a wire handle and the saucepan utilizes a handle that locks firmly when in the upright position. These lightweight sets range in volume from one litre to a five litre set (in increments of one litre). RRP \$31, \$38.50, \$45, \$63 and \$69, respectively.

Olicamp has also produced its own stainless steel version of a *cooking set*, similar to the



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well-known Trangia sets. The Multi Set 1 comes complete with two saucepans, a frying-pan, a kettle and a stove (no burner)—the Multi Set 2 does not include a kettle. RRP \$125.50 and \$92, respectively. These items are widely available in outdoor shops and are distributed by *Outdoor Survival*.

Bottles

Also from *Outdoor Survival* is the *Olicamp* range of stainless steel bottles. These are available in 0.3 litre, 0.5 litre, 0.7 litre and one litre sizes, and all are slightly heavier than their familiar aluminium counterparts. RRP \$24, \$25.50, \$28 and \$32, respectively.

The *Trangia* multifuel bottle has a unique valve which, it is claimed, only allows fuel to exit the bottle when you want it to. Available in two sizes, it sells for around \$20 (half litre size) and \$22 (one litre size). Distributed in Australia by *Ruscus Supplies*.

Hot stuff

Two new types of stoves fit directly on to screw-type gas cartridges, like those made by EPI Gas and Primus. The stainless steel *Tot Gun* is available in three sizes—Small (210 grams), Medium and Large (290 grams)—the stoves utilize folding pot-supports and can be packed into a small billy or pot for storage or transportation. They sell for around \$30, \$35 and \$40, respectively.

The *Honey Bird Pack-in* stove has three snap-in legs/pot-supports, weighs only 250 grams, comes with a small fuel sack and costs about \$40. Both products are distributed by *Ruscus Supplies*.

Bagged

When browsing through the seemingly endless range of outdoor clothing available you may have noticed two new fabrics—*DryLoft* and *WindStopper*, both manufactured by W L Gore and Associates, the makers of Gore-Tex. *DryLoft* is intended to be a highly breathable and waterproof fabric used in the manufacture of baffled or quilted items (such as sleeping-bags). It is used to protect insulation from rain and snow on the outside and moisture vapour on the inside, and is designed to be windproof. Thus *DryLoft*'s overall function is to keep insulation dry and improve the effectiveness of the insulated item.

WindStopper is a highly breathable fabric claimed to be totally windproof. It is made by incorporating a lightweight membrane into an outdoor fabric such as fleece to produce a warm, windproof garment. It is important to note that items made from *WindStopper* are not waterproof, however.

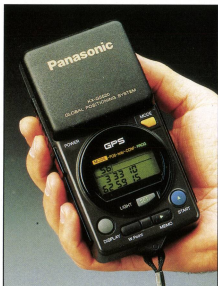
Fort Knox

The new *Saklock*, distributed by *Outdoor Survival*, is to a rucksack what a steering-wheel lock is to a car. This easy-to-use device simply attaches to a 25 millimetre Fastex buckle (common on hood-closing straps on most rucksacks). When locked in place, the buckle cannot be opened and your pack is secure, at least in theory, from thieves. While the *Saklock* is no protection against a sharp knife and a quick hand (not to mention kidnappers!), its value as a deterrent is obvious. RRP \$25.

EQUIPMENT

Technoweenies' delight

The *KX-G5520X*, the latest *GPS* receiver from *Panasonic*, is a small, hand-held device that can store 99 locations, nine reversible routes, will display your position in either latitude and longitude or Universal Transverse Mercator co-ordinates, and can be read in the dark. The receiver is powered by an AA alkaline battery



The latest packet of chips from Panasonic—the *KX-G5520X* GPS receiver.

pack with a lithium battery as a memory back-up. The receiver comes with a carry-strap and AA battery case, with options including AC adapter, external antenna adapter, adjustable mount and microwave oven...just kidding about the microwave oven. Phone *Panasonic* for further information on 13 2600. RRP \$995.

Pole sitting

To the top of Mt Rainier, to a bike ride across America, *Pole Pack* has done it. Working so well you will forget the weight of your camping gear. When we read this in the leaflet we were as intrigued as Wild reader, Jan Van Emden, who obtained it by answering an advertisement in a US magazine and sent it on to us for the benefit of staff gear freaks and readers who may want to ease the weight of their rucksack off tired shoulders. The nifty device is pictured in 'hiking', biking and skiing mode. Things might be different on Mt Rainier but we suspect that *Pole Pack* might meet its match in Tasmania's bogs and scrub.

Shady aid

New Zealand's Ministry of Health has published a brochure detailing broad spectrum sunscreens with a sun protection factor (SPF) rating of 15 or higher (there are over 1300). All sunscreens listed block out enough UV light to comply with the Australian/New Zealand Standard test for broad-spectrum protection. ■

New products (on loan to *Wild*) and/or information about them, including colour slides, are welcome for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed, include recommended retail prices and preferably not exceed 200 words. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.



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WALKS, WALKS, WALKS!

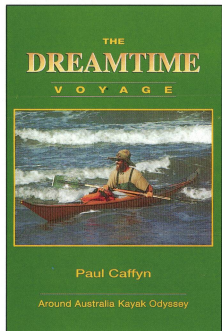
Tyrone Thomas's pen runs amok

BOOKS

The Dreamtime Voyage

by Paul Caffyn (Kayak Dundee Press, 1994, RRP \$42 including packing and airmail postage from RD 1, Runanga, West Coast, New Zealand, or from NSW and Qld canoe shops).

When the bow of Paul Caffyn's sea kayak *Lalaguli* nosed into the beach at Queenscliff, Victoria, on 23 December 1982, the first circumnavigation of Australia by kayak was complete. This 15 000 kilometre, 360-day journey—surely one of the greatest individual odysseys this country has ever seen—is recounted in *The Dreamtime Voyage*.



This is a tale of one man's struggle with wind and tides, treacherous surf and daunting expanses of coastal cliff, not to mention sharks, crocodiles, sea snakes and box jellyfish. Above all it is about summoning the resolve to keep paddling day after day in dogged pursuit of an ambitious objective. For all the stout-hearted support of his back-up crew, the reader feels that Caffyn is very much on his own.

This commitment is a strong undercurrent throughout the book but it never swamps the story. Caffyn's lengthy narrative is chatty and easygoing with moments of drama, wit and candour. Though born in Sydney and bred in Brisbane, his vernacular is unmistakably Kiwi. He's chuffed with good paddling days, has good fun with his cobbers and at times gets into a wee bit of trouble.

Given the gruelling timetable it is inevitable that many stretches of coastline receive only

fleeting coverage. While attuned to natural splendours, the focus of the book is firmly on the task in hand. The photos similarly reflect the difficulty of creating memorable images when trussed in a kayak. Nevertheless a generous selection of colour and black-and-white shots assists in documenting the voyage. The only serious omission are maps to help the reader to navigate through the stages detailed in each chapter.

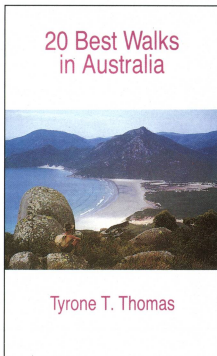
Ultimately Caffyn's 'Dreamtime' is not some attachment to a specific place or faux mythology. Rather it is the simple, nomadic life he can lead with his boat. There is the daily tussle with the elements, there are the rituals of making camp in spectacular surroundings and meeting characters who share his bond with the sea and its margins. For all its undoubted rigours, it is an existence reduced to a few of the more meaningful essentials. Anyone with the taste for such a life will relish this tale.

Quentin Chester

20 Best Walks in Australia

by Tyrone Thomas (Hill of Content, second edition 1994, RRP \$17.95).

This guide covers an extremely wide variety of walks ranging from wanders around tourist regions like Port Arthur to hard one-day walks such as Mt Bartle Frere and multiday walks like the Overland Track. While the walks selected are very good, the title of the 'best' is a bit of a misnomer. Walks described by the author in his other books as some of Australia's best have not been included here.



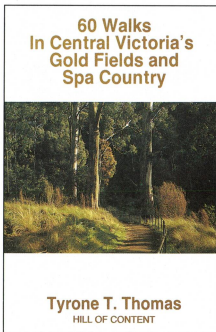
In my opinion, the book's major fault is the inconsistency of the walks selected. The book states that special attention is given to overseas visitors. It is implied that they will have had little experience, so walks which wander around Sydney Harbour and Port Arthur in Tasmania are included. However, there is also a 29 kilometre day walk near Sydney which would be too long for an inexperienced walker.

Many of the management requirements for specific areas are not described, such as the entry fee to Port Arthur, the fire-bans for the Overland Track or the camping ban at the alpine lakes near Mt Kosciusko. These—and others—are well-established restrictions which should have been included. The notes themselves are well written and interesting to read and the majority of the walks are well suited for short-term visitors to Australia. If the few harder walks were replaced, the guide would be closer to its intended aim.

John Chapman

60 Walks in Central Victoria's Gold Fields and Spa Country

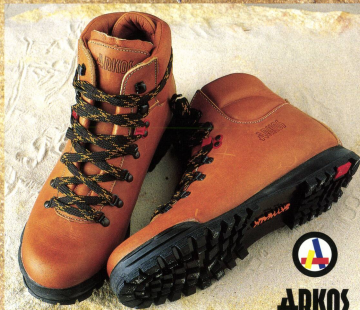
by Tyrone Thomas (Hill of Content, 1994, RRP \$17.95).



Bushwalking authors don't come more prolific than Tyrone Thomas. His books of track notes now number 12, including two German-language titles and one in its fifth edition. And with time they have progressed from the first controversial and rather primitively produced efforts.

His latest publication, *60 Walks*, should have considerable appeal to many Victorian

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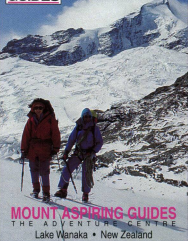
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walkers looking for (mostly day) walking country away from the usual haunts. The chosen walks are heavily slanted towards the inexperienced and/or those unaccustomed to too much strain accompanying their walking experiences. The maps are generally clear and helpful; there is a sprinkling of workmanlike, rather than inspiring, colour photos; and the standard of publication of this little paperback is reasonably good.

Chris Baxter

50 Walks in North Queensland

by Tyrone Thomas (Hill of Content, 1994, RRP \$15.95).

Bushwalkers have long been familiar with the Tyrone Thomas guidebook formula and *50 Walks in North Queensland* follows in the tradition. The layout of this recent publication is similar to previous ones and it is quite easy to find a suitable walk using the area map, table of gradings and listings which sort the walks according to difficulty, distance and place. The standard of the publication is better than Thomas's earlier releases.

50 Walks In North Queensland



Tyrone T. Thomas
HILL OF CONTENT

The walks are mostly short (a few hours) although the few longer ones included take several days. The major areas covered include Hinchinbrook Island, the Daintree, Mt Bartle Frere and a host of smaller regions stretching along the coast from the Whitsunday Islands to Cape Tribulation and west to Chillagoe Caves and Porcupine Gorge near Hughenden. Short chapters deal with climate, equipment and safety. While brief, these discussions probably contain all that needs to be included in such a book.

A map accompanies the track notes for each walk. Although clearly explaining the route, these maps tend to lack aesthetic appeal. Several pages of colour photos show wide shots of some of the regions, giving the prospective visitor an indication of what to expect. An index of place names would have been a useful addition.

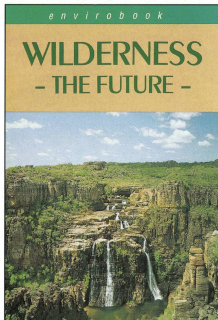
Without getting too serious, the book is a good introduction to some of the most popular walks in north Queensland. Its 140 pages and small format make it compact and light enough to be very unobtrusive in the pack.

Robert Rankin

Wilderness—the Future (Papers from the Fourth National Wilderness Conference 1993)

edited by Will Barton (Envirobook, 1994, RRP \$24.95).

Those who read *Wild* will generally need no persuasion regarding the value of wilderness. They already find inspiration and adventure in our wild places and many will have experienced threats to wilderness areas.



In the time that I have been bushwalking, Lake Pedder was flooded before I could see it; loggers—bleating about a 'sustainable' industry—have moved into ever more remote places, and roads have encroached further and further into wilderness areas.

Reading the papers from the Fourth National Wilderness Conference provides more emotional ups and downs than walking the Yo-yo Track. It is inspiring as one thinks of the wilderness itself and the great efforts people have made to save it; it is depressing to look at the way large-scale developers keep invading yet more areas of our diminishing wilderness.

Some of the material is measured research about management of particular areas, an essential part of the fight for wilderness.

Some is more novel, such as Tim Bonyhady's fascinating exploration of the relationship between art and wilderness in Australia, which illustrated many links I had not known of between early artists and photographers and efforts to save the areas they loved.

Bob Brown's feisty piece on the future of wilderness in Australia is inspiring in the way so much of what he says can be. At one point, he cogently attacks calls for 'balance' when all this really means is yet more destruction of our diminishing wilderness heritage.

Two papers explore the native-title issue.

Overall, *Wilderness: the Future* provides an important overview of the state of wilderness and the struggle to preserve it in Australia today.

Brian Walters

The Idea of Wilderness—from Prehistory to the Age of Ecology

by Max Oelschlaeger (Yale University, 1993).

In the long term, it is the work of thinkers and philosophers which will do most to reshape our world.

While I have some reservations about the work, Oelschlaeger's book is without question one of the major contributions to the discussion of wilderness in recent years.

There are few works with which to compare Oelschlaeger's herculean overview: perhaps John Passmore's *Man's Responsibility for Nature*, or Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind* are two, but they are far less grand in scope.

Oelschlaeger runs the gamut from pre-civilized cultural views of wilderness, through ancient Mediterranean ideas, and on to modern thinkers.

He deals in detail with the American philosophers Thoreau, Muir and Leopold, and critically examines a number of modern wilderness philosophies, from deep ecology to ecofeminism to ecocentrism.

Australian readers may miss the needed discussion of Australian indigenous attitudes to the land, which are not adequately considered in the book's discussion of the neolithic and palaeolithic eras, and there may be too much about American thinkers.

Oelschlaeger's work is scholarly philosophy, and thus will not appeal to most readers. However, as the pre-eminent modern work on the philosophy of wilderness, it will have a great impact on what is written in this field in years to come.

BW

Earthforce! An Earth Warrior's Guide to Strategy

by Paul Watson (Chaco Press, 1993).

Paul Watson is the founder of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, and leader of several audacious expeditions on the world's oceans to stop whaling, drift-netting, sealing, and the slaughter of dolphins. Watson's approach is simple, direct and effective; he rams and sinks illegal whaling- and sealing-ships. He proudly emphasizes the society's record of never having caused or suffered a human death or injury while protecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of marine animals.

Earthforce!, his first book (subtitled 'An Earth Warrior's Guide to Strategy'), could have been a compelling and gripping personal account of his many dramatic confrontations with pirate whalers on the high seas, of how he handled each situation, and of his own philosophies on direct action. Such a book would undoubtedly have been moving, inspirational and educational for a lot of humbler and less flamboyant 'earth warriors'. *Earthforce!*, however, reads more like a bad parody of a CIA spy manual. It is a poorly written mishmash of Watson's opinions on

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just about everything from abortion to deviant criminal behaviour, and a strong odour of hubris pervades the book. The cover gives a clue to what's inside: the author has awarded himself the title of 'Captain', and the dominating graphic is planet Earth covered in metal spikes to depict a fearsome-looking mace. This graphic was kindly contributed by *Playboy* magazine, a publication which probably regards bunnies as an endangered species.

The book purports to be an amalgamation of the philosophies of four principal contributors: Sun Tzu, an ancient Chinese general; Miyamoto Musashi, a Japanese master samurai; Marshal McLuhan, a Canadian professor of media philosophy; and, of course, Watson himself. In fact it is a bizarre cocktail of Watson's interpretations of these and others' writing. The text is chock-a-block with such popular spy novel language as 'the enemy', 'infiltrator', 'expendable agents' and the like. This vocabulary is juxtaposed with pretentious Latin aphorisms under every chapter heading as well as a sprinkling of quotations from cross-cultural sources ranging from Woody Allen to Chief Seattle, some of which have no relevance to the rest of the text. On page 59, for instance, a delightful 19th-century Japanese haiku poem about a moment of self-realization is plonked completely out of context in the middle of a chapter on how to deal with enemy infiltrators in your environmental organization.

Watson chooses some unlikely targets for his tirade; not greedy whalers, or even capitalism as one might expect, but seemingly the entire culture and religious heritage of human endeavour since the year dot. Everything human-made from the pyramids to Van Gogh's art and symphony music is roundly dismissed as mere monuments to human vanity. Watson does not attempt to convince the reader of the rightness of 'deep ecology'; he simply takes it as a given. In later chapters, his even more bizarre views emerge; for instance, his implication that all deviant criminals are born of women who would have aborted them were it not for anti-abortion laws! (page 31) He goes on to assert that 'the most dangerous threat to the future has come about: the lethal explosion of human populations'. As a deep ecologist he should know better: he has not addressed the problem of the grossly unjust consumption of the rich nations, which condemns the poorest communities in the world to having large families—their only hope in places without pensions, superannuation or social security. The single most significant key to family size reduction has been women's access to health and education.

Earthforce! does have one or two redeeming qualities. The book is peppered with gripping anecdotes of some of Watson's campaign episodes and one can appreciate his boldness and imagination in dealing with life-threatening situations. However, because he includes these stories only to illustrate a point of strategy within the broader text, their emotional impact is diminished. Watson comes across as a calculating, omniscient autocrat wielding absolute mastery over everything—including his feelings. Often, too, his stories serve to score points against the

inferior tactics of the enemy, the police, infiltrators, or other environmental groups like Greenpeace.

Earthforce! could have been brilliant, stimulating and wise. Instead it is an arrogant and impoverished exhibition of Captain Paul Watson's egotism. I must say I was disappointed.

Louise Shepherd

VIDEOS

Tarkiner Paner

(Kaganovich Productions, second edition. 1993, RRP \$16.95 from the producer, PO Box 83, Paddington, NSW 2021).

Made on behalf of the Wilderness Society, *Tarkiner Paner* is a 22-minute video documentary promoting the natural and historic values of the Tarkine wilderness of north-west Tasmania.

The 450 000 hectare Tarkine wilderness is an unprotected area that contains Australia's largest tract of undisturbed rain forest. Its diverse environment contains rain forest, eucalypt forest, plains, scrub, sand dunes and coastal features. It also supports the magnificent Huon pine and is a refuge for a species of large (up to one metre in length) freshwater crayfish. Until their demise last century, Aborigines had also lived in the region for about 500 generations—the Tarkine holds a strong spiritual significance for today's Aborigines.

The video highlights the Tarkine as an important area for World Heritage listing, particularly for its variety of scenery and landscapes, flora and fauna, and Aboriginal historic sites. In December 1990 the International Union for the Conservation of Nature recommended that the Tarkine be considered for World Heritage status.

But the Tarkine is under threat. Vehicular access is causing erosion in many places, wood-chip mills are planned for the northern and eastern edges of the Tarkine, and in May 1993 mining resource security legislation was passed by the Tasmanian Government which guaranteed unlimited access to all wilderness areas outside the World Heritage Area.

It is hoped that by the production of this video, knowledge of this area and its values will increase, and that this increased knowledge among Australians will lead to the area being protected as part of the World Heritage Area.

You may need to be quick if you want to purchase a copy of this video as the first edition sold out in three weeks.

Glenn van der Kruiff

MAPS

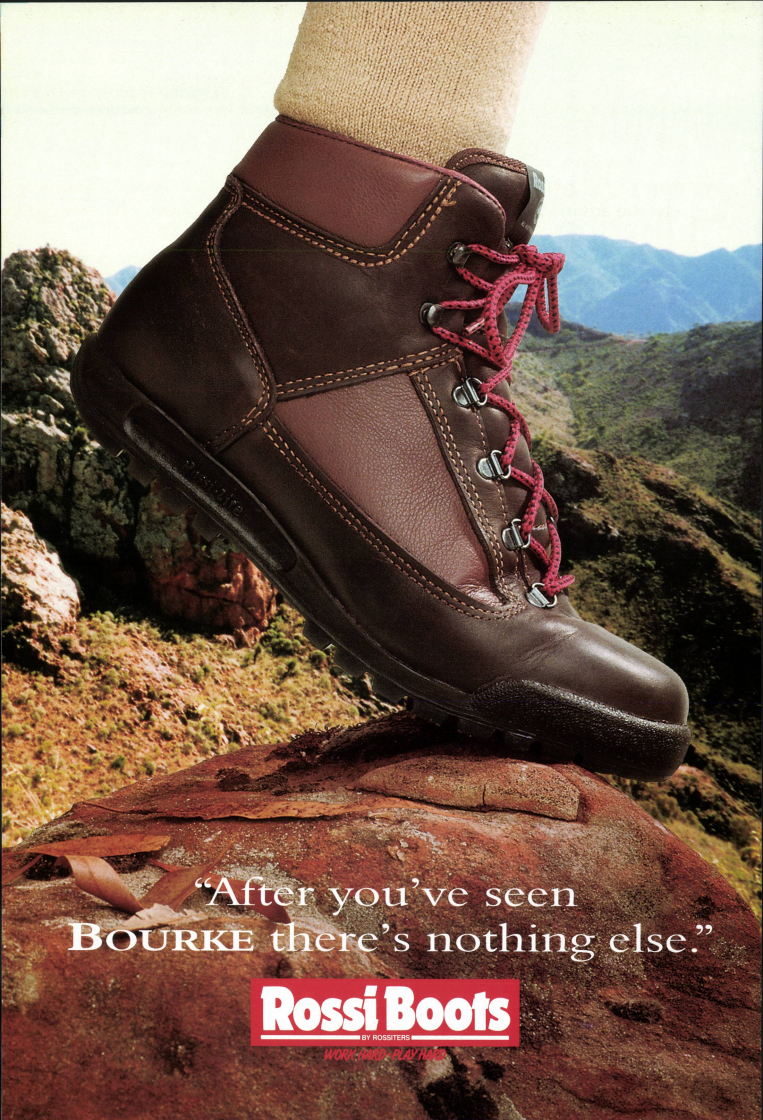
Mallacoota

(Vicmap, 1994, RRP \$8.00).

This newest full-colour map in the Outdoor Leisure Series includes Genoa and Gipsy Point in the north, Wingan Inlet in the west, Cape Howe in the east and all areas in between at a scale of 1:50 000. There is also an inset map of Mallacoota and Mallacoota Inlet at a scale of 1:25 000. ■

Go

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.



"After you've seen
BOURKE there's nothing else."

Rossi Boots

BY ROSSINI

WORK-HARD-PLAY-HARD

BREASTS OR THE BOTTLE

Nestlé ads in *Wild* under fire

I would first like to commend you on your ethical advertising policy; you produce one of the few glossy magazines which does not advertise four-wheel-drives and the timber industry. For that reason I was surprised to see Nestlé ads in *Wild*...

The World Health Organization estimates that some 1.5 million infant deaths a year, mostly in developing countries, could be averted through effective breast-feeding. Baby milk companies, such as Nestlé, are fully aware that infants die from unsafe bottle-feeding, yet they continue to promote their milk products to mothers and health workers in developing countries.

Breast milk is the perfect food for babies, it is always clean, fresh, free and provides vital antibodies which protect against infection. Given the right help and support, some 99 per cent of mothers can breast-feed. In southern Brazilian cities, research has found that babies receiving no breast milk are 14 times more likely to die from diarrhoea than breast-fed babies.

An international Nestlé boycott was started in 1977; in 1981 the World Health Organization introduced a code on the marketing of breast-milk substitutes, and in 1984 Nestlé agreed to abide by the code and the boycott was stopped. By the late 1980s it became apparent that Nestlé was still violating the code, and the boycott was reinstated.

Nestlé violates the World Health Organization's international code in many ways, including:

- by providing free supplies of baby formula to hospitals in more than 50 countries
- by labelling its packaging in a language not understood by mothers in 11 countries
- by advertising whole-milk powder for newborn babies in Malaysia even though this isn't safe for babies under six months old...

Indra Esguerra
O'Connor, ACT

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the recent complaint made by a member of Community Aid Abroad urging you to reject advertising by Nestlé Australia. Let me assure you that this small group's claims are false and misleading.

For over three years now, this small group of activists has claimed that Nestlé violates international and Australian agreements in marketing its infant formula products. In Australia, the Government's Advisory Panel on the Marketing in Australia of Infant Formula (APMAIF), which reviews all allegations, has never upheld any such complaint against Nestlé.

Nestlé markets its infant formula products responsibly, in line with international and

Australian agreements and is deeply committed to infant and maternal nutrition.

P J Kelly
Manager
Corporate and Consumer Affairs
Nestlé Australia Ltd
Sydney, NSW

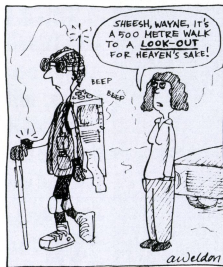
A total idiot

Recently in *Wild* there have been various articles regarding 'hi-tech' bushwalking. As an avid supporter of this, I would like to express my views on the subject...

Mobile phones and GPS units shouldn't be frowned upon as a safety measure—anything that makes outdoor activities safer and more enjoyable should be encouraged...

A phone a group would save time and money during search and rescue, reassure accident victims, and also reassure relatives of overdue parties.

HI-TECH HIKER



A GPS, map and compass would steer you safely towards your destination, home, or out of trouble.

You would be a total idiot to wholly and solely rely on phones and GPS units as safety measures—nothing beats common sense, planning, walking within your capabilities, and good map and compass skills...

Ken Fraser
Herston, Qld

Equal joy

My girlfriend has an artificial hip and is receiving an artificial leg, yet even though we have an Equal Opportunities Act she is not

entitled to visit wilderness areas in our National Parks due to the fact that she can only walk short distances. I feel these wilderness areas have been locked up by greedy bureaucrats and conservationists who are the elite few who are either super-fit or who have a key. Why should I have to break the law to drive my girlfriend into these areas so she can experience equal joy?...

C P Skeates
Garra, ACT

Bloody generators

Just a note to voice a concern about the amount of coverage rockclimbing is getting in the mag at the moment. They've got their own publication. Leave it to that. Anyway, how you can call putting in hundreds of bolts up a rock-face rockclimbing is beyond me (not to mention using bloody generators for this purpose)...

Ben Wilson
Katoomba, NSW

ZPG

Thanks to Marjorie Gray (Wildfire, *Wild* no 53) for calling on the green lobby to get behind the move for reduced immigration to Australia.

She correctly points out that the natural increase of population in Australia is now zero or slightly negative, and that all the present increase is due to immigration. This immigration continues to put pressure on our fragile environment—more houses, more roads, more cars...

I have recently been to North America, Europe and Asia and have come to realize that Australia's greatest asset is its relatively low population density. Other people do not have the tremendous benefit of being able to drive out of the city for a couple of hours into quiet country villages or primitive wilderness.

The recession has prompted the government to effectively halve net immigration over the last few years. Australians should strongly urge that this trend is continued until we approach the ultimate goal of zero population growth.

Tasmania has it now, and is benefiting with a more relaxed, pollution-free and healthier environment. Zero population growth should be an aim for all of Australia.

Rick Jamieson
Bowen Mountain, NSW

Very little research

On page 19 of *Wild* no 54 [sic] is an item concerning a couple who 'will become the first Australian couple to spend the winter in Antarctica during 1995'.

Unfortunately for Don and Margie McIntyre, the couple involved, this is not

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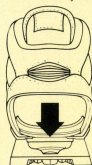
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possible. Many Australian couples have wintered in Antarctica since Lynn and I did so at the Australian station, Mawson, in 1984. Couples have also wintered at the stations Casey and Davis.

In fact, being the first Australian couple in reality fairly minor as 'couples' have been wintering in Antarctica... [since] 1947...

Someone has done very little research before going to print... [or, apparently, before writing this letter as it refers to Wild no 54 which, of course, is this issue! Editor]

Warwick Williams
East Lindfield, NSW

Peacemeal review

'Smug contempt' has a new meaning. Smug contempt is when you think it's responsible to write to *Wild* (Wildfire, Wild no 53) recommending novice cross-country skiers go bush at Mt Arbuckle (or anywhere else in the snow) with no one in the party who can read a topographic map.

No, Mr Peace, it wasn't smug contempt I was feeling but genuine concern for beginners... It is a hard pick, but the most... foul of your droppings is on page 8 of your book *Ski-Touring in Victoria and NSW*. I quote:

The most popular type of outfit amongst XC skiers is the bib and brace, similar to that worn by downhillers, with a pair of light cotton pants underneath. Tracksuit pants over the top of soft cotton pants also work well...

Cotton may be adequate for Lygon Street, and dapper in the tropics, but it can be lethal in rainy, slushy, sleety conditions often found in Australian high country. Cotton does not hold warmth when wet. I have found day trippers (in mid-November) near death from cold wearing exactly what Mr Peace recommends...

John Hempton
Lyneham, ACT

Not up to standard

Please find enclosed my subscription renewal form and cheque for the magazine I so enjoy to receive each quarter.

What I really would like to compliment you on is the quality of the printing you are getting from York Press.

I have been a printer now for almost 34 years and have seen many magazines of varying standard, and this includes magazines for the printing trade, which, incidentally, do not come up to the standard you are getting...

Graeme Collins
Quirindi, NSW

I just wanted to say how impressed I was with your very prompt reply to my letter...

No wonder you won the 1993 Telecom & Victorian Government Small Business Award!

My only complaint is that *Wild* isn't published often enough!...

Pam Longe
East Doncaster, Vic

Readers' letters are welcome (with sender's full name and address, for verification). A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

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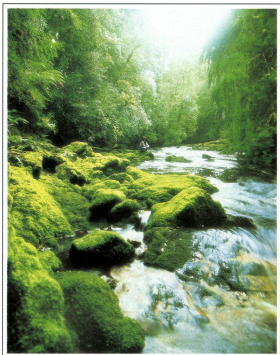
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Bird River.

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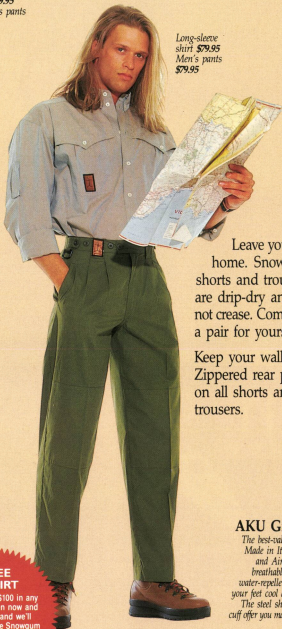


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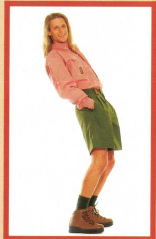
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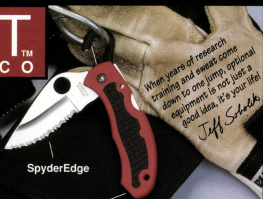
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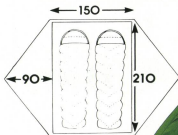


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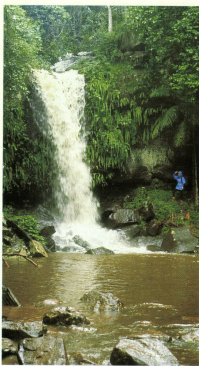


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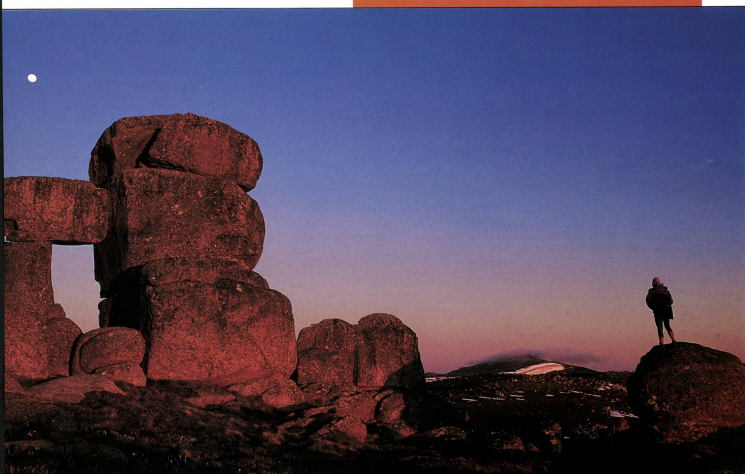
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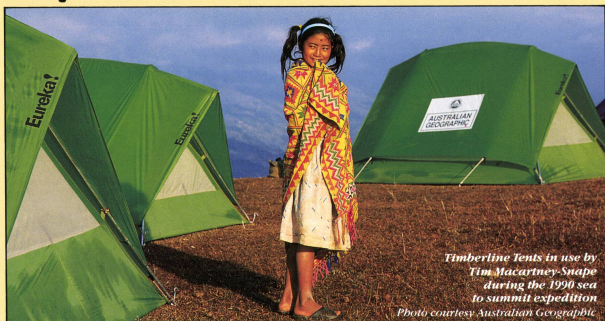
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